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PHILIP EULENBURG
THE KAISER'S FRIEND

THE KAISER IN 1890

JOHANNES HALLER

PHILIP EULENBURG: THE KAISER'S FRIEND

VOLUME ONE

TRANSLATED FROM THE
GERMAN BY
ETHEL COLBURN MAYNE

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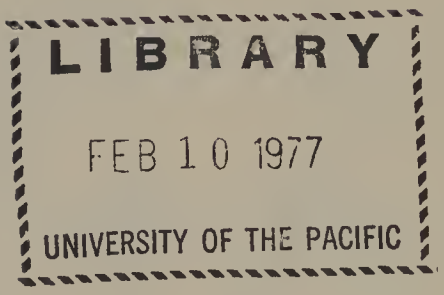

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Some passages in the earlier portion of this book have been omitted by the translator. They belong to the period when Eulenburg was Minister at Munich, and tell of internal politics and the position of contending parties in Bavaria at that time. These seemed now to offer little interest for English readers, indicative though they are of the Minister's political insight and his zeal for Imperial Germany's well-being—and well-doing. Here and there in later chapters there are slighter excisions, such as of repetitive matter and allusions to facts which have lost any importance they could ever have had for those outside Court-circles in pre-revolutionary Germany.

The translator has had, like all translators, to consider the vexed question of how best to render official designations which have no true equivalent in English official parlance. An instance is "Staatsanwalt," which is a more compendious official title than any we have in England, corresponding roughly to our "Attorney—or Solicitor General," and also on occasion to our "Crown Prosecutor." As the frequent appearance of the German "Staatsanwalt" in the long chapter and appendix relating to Eulenburg's trial for perjury would have been disagreeable to the eye, and vague and confusing to the mind, the translator decided (after consulting the best authorities) to render it as "Crown Prosecutor" in the passages where this was evidently what it most really stood for, and as "Solicitor General" in those where it could not bear the former interpretation. If in this rendering the translator has erred, she would beg to be at any rate acquitted of carelessness. The point was most earnestly weighed, and the best advice requested and followed.

The translator is responsible for the renderings of German into English verse; the quotations (in Eulenburg's diary of the trial) from Marcus Aurelius were taken from Casaubon's English version.

A translator is not perhaps called upon to give any opinion on a translated work; but it may be relevant for this one to say that the sincere, warm-hearted and unaffected manner of the author so won upon her sympathies in the course of her long task that at the end of it she was as desirous as he to believe in Eulenburg's absolute innocence of the charges brought against him. Doubts of it will never perhaps, for anyone but Herr Haller, be wholly dissipated; but this book makes it difficult, if not impossible, to regard Eulenburg as the type of degenerate depicted at the trial so indignantly commented on by the author; and still more difficult is it to believe that he simulated illness in order to escape from "justice."

ETHEL COLBURN MAYNE.

PREFACE

To the First German Edition

THIS book is intended to be a rehabilitation —the rehabilitation of a man who is dead, and to whom life meted out the bitter wrong of being condemned unheard for things of which he had never been guilty.

Prince Philip zu Eulenburg died an outlaw. He was held to have been a pernicious influence on his Emperor, responsible as few others were for the German disaster ; a man of degenerate nature and disreputable life—and ultimately a criminal who had contrived to evade the course of justice by simulated illness. Such was the verdict on him in his lifetime ; and such the general judgment pronounced on him in his grave. Possibly, amid the clamour, there were more than it seemed who kept an open mind and did not close their eyes to the fact that to indict a man is not enough to condemn him—especially when the indictment was based on such improbabilities (not to say impossibilities) and derived from such disreputable sources. But those who thought in this way were unable to gain a hearing. The world was resolute to believe the worst.

In the following pages the truth will be found. It is the contrary of everything which has hitherto been held to represent it.

What Prince Eulenburg did and effected as a statesman, though it may ultimately have proved fruitless for the Fatherland, can redound only to

his honour. At the sacrifice of what he believed to be his natural vocation, he did his duty so far as in him lay, making his abilities (of whose limitations he was fully conscious) serviceable to the commonwealth—selfless and unambitious as none other was in circumstances of almost inconceivable difficulty; asking no reward but the consciousness of loyal duty done.

It has pleased some to indulge in cheap depreciation, or even vituperation, of him as a dilettante who, despite his incompetence, contrived to snatch from men more talented a high place in his official career. Such people purposely ignored the fact that that career, begun under the auspices of Bismarck, was neither remarkably rapid nor remarkably brilliant. If the Emperor's personal friend became, at forty-one, Minister at a German Court and remained there for six years, then (at forty-eight) to rise to being Ambassador in Vienna —was that any stupendous kind of favouritism? And as to his performance of his duties—what he could and did achieve as a diplomat is abundantly testified to in this book, and by those best qualified to speak; while the most ample proofs have recently been made accessible to all and sundry in the shape of his official reports. Anyone who takes the trouble to examine the collection of Foreign Office documents and compare his reports with those of others, will be obliged—if he does not wish to be unfair—to confess that they justify very high claims for Eulenburg's ability. In the 'nineties the German Empire could boast of such foreign representatives as other States and other ages might justly envy. Count Hatzfeldt in London, Count Münster in Paris, Herr von Radowitz in Madrid, Herr von Bülow in Rome, Baron von Marschall in Constantinople, in his way Prince Radolin, too, in

Petersburg—these make a truly distinguished list. The Ambassador in Vienna had nothing to fear from comparison with such colleagues.

How he conceived his mission and what he accomplished in it, our picture will show in broad outlines to anyone who wants to see. It is not too much to say that if the alliance with Austria-Hungary then survived a certain period of tension, and if the policy of the German Empire was not wrecked on those perilous shores, Eulenburg should be given all the credit for it. Did not Secretary of State von Bülow himself write in the summer of 1897 from Vienna : " Goluchowski said straight out to me that but for you it would have come to certain smash. He raves about you ; your prestige in Vienna is enormous."

But he did more, much more, than publicly represent the Empire with dignity, tact, and success. The world has hitherto known nothing—or else has believed the exact contrary of the truth—about the unobtrusive, immensely valuable work he did in the more private departments of the service, or of his arduous and exhausting labours as " Ambassador of the Government to the Emperor." It will now have to recognise and acknowledge that there were times when the mechanism of government in Prussia would have stuck fast or come to hopeless smash if Eulenburg had not lent his ever-conciliatory, ever-helpful hand. What his friend Bülow once wrote to him was but the simple truth : " If your hand, so skilful yet guided always by the kindest of hearts, had ceased to reknit and disentangle the threads, the pattern would have got into a state of irremediable confusion."

The Prince was said to have been a harmful friend and counsellor to the Emperor, to have led him astray by fantastic theories which encouraged

him in his absolutist proclivities, to have upheld reactionary ambitions of the most dangerous kind —in short, to have been an influence which every circumstance made it an imperative duty to destroy. Never has an historical personality been so misrepresented as his was! The world, and especially the world of Liberal Germany, will now have to learn to its shame that the man who was stoned as its bitterest enemy was in reality one of the few friends—perhaps the only friend—it possessed in the Emperor's immediate environment; that the supposed apostle of "the Monarchy by the Grace of God" was earlier than most, and more acutely than any, aware that the days of that absolute rule traditional in Old Prussia were numbered—nay, that Eulenburg would have been fully prepared to accept the logical consequences of this fact had he not, on the other hand, seen no less clearly that for such a hazardous undertaking the right man was lacking, and the nation still unripe.

People have persisted in regarding him as the typical Court sycophant and talebearer, always ready to indulge the Imperial caprices, to make his own view subservient to the wishes of the Most High, to foster the sovereign's exaggerated self-esteem by perpetual fumes of incense. They will now learn how uncongenial were the tedious forms and ceremonies of a Court to that true, and therefore liberal-minded, aristocrat; how very markedly his proud independence distinguished him from the other men who surrounded the Emperor. "I *will not* be dressed like one of the Imperial suite!" And they will be utterly amazed to find how often and how bluntly the so-called sycophant told the truth to his friend upon the throne, from the first occasional admonitions and suggestions after

Bismarck's fall to the great dialogue at Rominten in the autumn of 1903. That puts an end to all doubt. Did not Holstein himself—even then beginning, with his morbid malignity, to circulate the legend of Eulenburg the Flatterer, blind ministrant to the Imperial aberrations—pay him this tribute at the end of 1896: "Your letter" [to the Emperor] "was a great and courageous action, executed with the shining tact of which you have the secret." History will appreciate the verdict which that same Holstein delivered in a letter to Eulenburg so early as 1892: "For once at any rate it may be said that there was one person who told the truth to William II. But I really believe that there was only one."

Prince Eulenburg was held to be a dreamer and visionary, and for that reason alone a dangerous person to be near a sovereign already too prone to indulge his own lively imagination. It will here be convincingly shown that that richly-gifted artistic temperament, with its tenderness and wealth of imagination, could display another and a quite differently constituted side of itself whenever it had to deal with practical affairs, and above all with official duties. Then Eulenburg was all calm reason, sound commonsense; then his poetic insight came into play only in so far as it enabled him to grasp more rapidly, foresee more surely, than others the nature and logic of events. His powers of political intuition were freely acknowledged by those who knew him. To the quantity of tributes from those in the best position to judge, which the reader will find in this book, I shall merely add here the pronouncement of an experienced diplomat who, though not a personal friend, had often worked with him, and who quite spontaneously assured me: "*Fausse route* he never took in policy!" Anyone

who obtains a clear idea of his intercourse with William II (of which the following pages will furnish abundant examples) must unhesitatingly subscribe to the verdict that it was never anything but the voice of reason that the Emperor heard from his friend's lips ; and will understand the feeling which wrung from the Prince, in the last days of his life, this lament : " If my sovereign had but listened oftener to me, how many things would have been different ! "

And the reader will also come to perceive why that salutary and beneficent influence failed of its full effect with the Emperor. This was because it was counteracted by other influences, which in the long run were more powerful ; not so much that they were more essentially congenial to the Emperor as that they were continually and imperceptibly prevalent, intangible as the air one breathes. About the influence exercised by the sovereign's military environment—need I say in so many words that this should not be confused with the German Army ?—little has hitherto been known. Prince Eulenburg regarded it as the real evil—a constant source of danger for Emperor and Empire. This book will show how untiringly he sought to counteract it, how he failed to destroy it, and how in the end his adversaries destroyed *him*.

In any other country it would perhaps suffice to rehabilitate a statesman if one showed his achievements in that sphere by the light of historical fact. In Germany it is not so. When it was possible to ruin a respected and highly-placed servant of the Crown and a personal friend of the Emperor by allowing one of the most unscrupulous poisoners of public opinion that has ever lived to attack his private life, and (having failed to bring home to him any transgression against the law) to drag into

the light of publicity alleged delinquencies of twenty years ago; and when the public was credulous enough to take such tales on trust, it is an imperative duty to remove all doubt on that subject likewise, however repugnant the handling of such ordure may be to those of finer susceptibilities. And since to this day it is only a very few who know what the notorious "Eulenburg Case" really signified and in what manner it was conducted, the essential facts must be set forth in these pages. The mask of strict legality must be torn from those "legal" proceedings, that the reader may learn what they truly were—a criminal act of vengeance in which men who wore the badges of Imperial aides-de-camp entered into an unnatural alliance with a demented conspirator, and a back-stairs journalist who was a danger to the community.

Those who can overcome their instinctive repugnance so far as to read that particular chapter may rest assured that the author felt still greater repugnance to writing it. They will have the opportunity of convincing themselves that in this instance also everything publicly spread abroad about the Prince was the contrary of the truth.

In this respect perhaps the most arrant falsehood was that he escaped judicial condemnation by simulating illness. Those who assert or repeat this can hardly be conscious of the enormity they thus attribute to a whole succession of reputable members of the medical profession, who all for well-nigh twelve years maintained that the Prince was not fit to be arrested or tried—as indeed even a single day of the trial by jury in July, 1909, had demonstrated as clearly as could any scientific experiment; one might say, any vivisection—for on that day the accused, before the hearing had even begun, fell into a dead faint, and the proceedings, amid the

general consternation, had to be indefinitely adjourned. Notwithstanding this, public opinion has persisted in saying that Prince Eulenburg was merely pretending to be ill.

It is to be hoped that the following statement will put an end to such incredible and malignant prejudice. Dr. Stoermer, *Medizinalrat*, with whom recently, when this book was almost ready for publication, a fortunate accident brought me into contact (after an earlier inquiry by letter in 1922 had failed to reach him), now writes to me :

" Berlin, *May* 9, 1924.

" To your request for an account of my connection with the trial of Prince Eulenburg I am glad to respond as follows :

" I was called in by the High Court when the question arose as to whether, and under what conditions, the trial could be resumed in the summer of 1909. In accordance with my instructions I repeatedly, and on every occasion without being in the least expected, visited Prince Eulenburg, who was then residing in Berlin, subjected him to the most exhaustive examination, and kept him under direct observation for an hour at a time, frequently testing his pulse as I did so.

" Since from the earlier proceedings it had been evident that the Prince's heart was affected and reacted unfavourably to such slight exertions as a mere bending of the knee or other trifling movements, I had been for some time apprehensive as to the effect of a trial lasting several days or possibly weeks. My opinion was that a few hours of such a trial might not have injuriously affected the Prince's heart ; he was then as much as sixty-two years old.

"The event transcended my fears. For the Prince, during the principal hearing in the midsummer of 1909, did within the very first hour undergo a quite typical attack. His aspect changed with startling rapidity. His face turned pale and ultimately took on a leaden hue; the Prince was in a state of complete collapse; a cold sweat broke out on his forehead, he trembled from head to foot, his lips became bluish, his nose sharp, his chin sank on his breast, and his pulse reached a frequency of over 160 beats, became threadlike, and finally ceased—in short, it was such a completely typical instance of heart-failure that one of my colleagues who was standing at the Prince's other side, and I myself, both feared that the worst might at any moment ensue. His condition was so manifest that even the lawyers saw that there was nothing for it but at once to stop the hearing.

"Thenceforward I received, about every six months, "confidential" instructions to examine the Prince anew as to his fitness for trial, and to furnish a written report. It was on each occasion emphasised that I was so to arrange my visit that it should come as a complete surprise to the Prince.

"I carried out these instructions in such a manner that I can say with a clear conscience that my arrival at Liebenberg Castle was in no single instance anticipated, or even observed. Usually I followed on the heels of the servant announcing me, so that on every occasion I found the Prince entirely unprepared. Often he would be in bed at unusual hours (six o'clock in the evening, or from eleven to twelve in the forenoon); on one of these surprise-visits, which took place three days after Christmas in the

evening (!) he was, when I arrived, just going into the castle *on crutches*, and evidently found it difficult to manage the one flight of steps to the hall-door, for he was panting a good deal, his heart was galloping, and the slight exertion left him visibly exhausted. The fundamental cause of the Prince's illness was arterial sclerosis attended by heart-failure—and this was in an advanced condition in 1909. In addition he suffered from chronic bronchitis, gout, blood-pressure, and symptoms of senile decay—all resulting in an extremely serious deterioration of the nervous system with evident physical debility. On several occasions I was able to establish the fact that the invalid's hands and feet, though he was lying in a warm bed, were icy-cold; and even in midsummer, though his hands might be warm when the examination began, I could very soon detect a rapid and alarming fall of temperature, extending to above the elbow.

"On account of these variations, which on every occasion I freshly observed, and which were purely physical in origin, I was never able conscientiously to give any other opinion than that the Prince was by no means equal to a trial which would extend over several weeks, and affect him both psychically and physically.

"It was repeatedly represented to me from high quarters that the Prince had probably made use of some drug by which his heart would be affected during the medical examination. The supposition is quite untenable. For apart from the fact that the Prince could scarcely, in the few minutes which elapsed between my arrival and the beginning of the examination, have had time to employ such a measure, I as a doctor am wholly unacquainted with any means of so

affecting the heart as to call forth such a condition as I have depicted in so short a space of time.

"I must therefore characterise as entirely groundless the suspicion, widespread though it is, that the Prince intentionally evaded justice. And I should like to add that even in cases of the most flagrant crimes committed by members of the lower classes, the proceedings are to this day suspended, because the incriminated parties were plainly in a condition of health which rendered them quite incapable of standing their trial.

"In conclusion, I would answer as follows your question as to my personal opinion on the principal material of the trial: From the impressions I received, on my repeated visits, of the Prince's personality I am unable to attach any credence to the sexual delinquencies attributed to him. I think I may claim to speak with some authority on this subject, on the ground of a medical practice extending over 33 years, and 28 years' service as a police-surgeon in Berlin.

"I think I have now responded to your request, and I authorise you to publish my statement, which I am ready at any moment to substantiate on oath.

"(Signed) DR. STOERMER."

The Prince could have averted his doom, had he been able to prevail on himself to speak out. He considered it a duty to be silent, and take the martyrdom on himself. But he did not intend that his name should be blasted for posterity. He awaited from history the justice which his own age had denied him. Once the considerations which had sealed his lips were removed, the world was to

learn what bitter wrong it had done him, simply because it did not know him. From the documents he left behind him—memoranda of the most various descriptions, but chiefly an extensive political correspondence—his rehabilitation was, when the time had come, to be constructed. He had entrusted the task, before the final arrangement had demonstrated the full extent of this valuable legacy, to the then member of the Reichstag, and afterwards Secretary of State, Conrad Haussmann. Later, as it became evident that the work would be quite too arduous for an extremely busy politician, I was called in, having made the Prince's acquaintance in August, 1915, and afterwards become both personally and by letter more intimate with him. The Prince thought that in the co-operation of a lawyer and an historian of very different political views he had found a guarantee for the practical and impartial execution of his purpose. In case Conrad Haussmann should not be alive at the time when publication became feasible, his son Robert Haussmann, solicitor of Stuttgart, was chosen to replace him.

The time came all too soon. On September 17, 1921, the Prince's eyes closed for ever; and by February 11, 1922, his trusted friend had followed him. Herr Robert Haussmann and I were confronted by the duty of carrying out the wishes of the deceased. From the Prince's own family, in particular the eldest son and heir, Prince Friedrich Wend zu Eulenburg-Hertefeld, all rights over the documents, as well as any influence on the time and manner of any kind of publication, were withdrawn by the last will and testament.[1]

[1] I must lay stress on this, because on the appearance of the Prince's reminiscences (*Aus 50 Jahren*, 1923) there was much talk of the family's having paid a large sum for the publication of the book. That is pure

The Prince had himself contemplated an exhaustive publication of the documents, which he rightly regarded as most valuable sources for the history of our time. There were public reasons why this could not be thought of for a period which none could define. The question arose whether we should do well to wait for happier days, which perhaps would never dawn, or whether it might not be better to lose no time in making a selection which would serve the principal purpose of a personal rehabilitation. We decided on the latter, urged thereto on the one hand by the fear that, if we delayed, interest in the Prince's personality and fate might die out, and render a later publication superfluous. But we were also impressed by the fact that in the daily flowing tide of "revelations," the Prince's character was never faithfully portrayed, but for the most part shown in the usual false light.[1] If this was not emphatically con-

invention. In conformity with the deceased's wishes the family has had nothing to do either with the earlier book or this one. The will absolutely precluded it. These publications and any subsequent ones were and are exclusively the property of the above-named literary executors, and of the publisher, who consequently are alone responsible for them.

[1] This applies particularly to the books by the one-time Press-agent at the Foreign Office, Otto Hammann, to whom his former position may lend great authority in the eyes of the uninitiated. In reality Hammann is, in this matter, anything but an authoritative witness, unless the fact that he was involved simultaneously with Prince Eulenburg in a trial for perjury can confer that distinction on him. The trial in question offers in many respects a remarkable contrast to that of the Prince. Hammann has very little personal knowledge, and it is surely an unusual proceeding to offer readers an avowed character-study of the Prince which is prefaced by the admission that the author knew him "only slightly," and is depicting him in the light of Holstein's information—Holstein, whose untruthfulness he himself strongly emphasises! That is enough to prove the inadequacy of the portrait. To give but one instance:—The Prince is said to have had "such a capacity for hatred as only jealous women possess." Everyone who knew the Prince knows that he was incapable of hatred. This was a prominent trait in his character.

tradicted while yet there was time, at a period when Germany's immediate past was being given so decided an outline, it was on the cards that for a great part of posterity also the Prince's image would, regardless of subsequent efforts, be falsified as envy and malice had caused it to be in his lifetime.

These reflections led us to decide on putting forth a picture of the Prince's life which should reveal his personality and his work as a statesman, without forestalling a subsequent publication of the documents he had left behind him. To this end I have selected from the abundant existing material what was necessary for the portrayal of the Prince as he really was, both as man and statesman. A history of his private life would not have been to his taste, for nothing was further from him than to give any publicity to matters which concerned himself alone. Nor could I contemplate a history of his official activities, for that was impracticable unless I made use of official documents. All I could do was to give some idea of the kind of influence he exercised. Thus many incidents of general importance had to be cursorily treated or entirely ignored; while others, of less apparent historical value—such as his activities as Secretary and Minister in Munich, his silent battles with Holstein in the Vienna period—demanded exhaustive treatment, because in them the Prince's political convictions and his conception of his office and duties find ample expression.

In such a picture it was inevitable that a goodly portion of Emperor William II's personal history should be brought to light. It is true that considerations quite unconnected with policy or political opinions might well have bid me pause, even after the Emperor himself, and the Crown Prince as well, had expressed themselves unreservedly on

the past for all the world to hear. I thought it my duty to ignore such considerations, because I am firmly persuaded that the information here imparted on the inner workings of the Government can have no other effect than to lead to a fairer and more merciful judgment on the unfortunate sovereign, who now has to expiate not only his own errors but those of others.

Some of the latest revelations seem to give more and more colour to the otiose view that it was only, or at any rate chiefly, the Emperor's personality and its weaknesses which brought Germany to destruction. No one could dream of denying or palliating those weaknesses. They are only too well known, and in this book also they will be dealt with. It offers nothing new in that respect. But something else will also be found in it. Here for the first time is shown, as clearly as in a living picture, with what stupendous difficulties William II had from the first to contend as a ruler, because his own servants perpetually intrigued against him, and because the most pernicious plots were woven in his immediate environment. It would have needed an extraordinarily forceful royal personality to overcome so much tacit resistance and continual friction. Once we know these things, we shall not have the heart to make the Emperor solely, or even principally, responsible for the national disaster. Judge him as sternly as we may, his guilt is far from being as great as that which others have incurred. Bernard von Bülow wrote of him in August, 1897 : "His Majesty . . . as a ruler will stand in the very greatest danger *if he is not surrounded by prudent and, more especially, loyal and trustworthy servants. Upon this it will depend whether his reign is to form a glorious or a melancholy page in our history. With his individuality either is possible.*"

Anyone who reads that verdict and recalls the facts will have to confess that another nation in the same position might have been truly great and fortunate under that Emperor. "Prudent and, more especially, loyal and trustworthy servants." . . . None was more prudent, more loyal, than Philip Eulenburg ; and it was of *his* services, *his* wise counsel, that the sovereign was to be deprived.

But apart from matters of detail, about which contention will never cease, this book claims one merit, and an incontestable one ; namely, that Emperor William II's name will be purged of one ugly stain—the stain of having for twenty years bestowed his friendship upon an undeserving recipient.

There is little to say of the material I have used. It is the literary legacy of the Prince, chiefly consisting in the extensive correspondence. Her Highness Princess Augusta has most kindly taken the greatest trouble in collating the proofs with the original documents. In this respect the Prince's own letters presented some difficulty, because only the drafts were at our disposal, and these were not easily legible on account of rapid handwriting and frequent alterations. The Prince was extraordinarily critical of everything he wrote, and as he was seldom quite satisfied with the way he had expressed himself on paper, he was prone to correct and polish his drafts a great deal. He would frequently have made further alterations in the fair copy, we may be sure. So it is not to be wondered at if the document actually despatched did not always correspond word for word with the draft he retained ; and I must request everyone who may be in possession of any of the Prince's letters to take this into consideration when judging my work. It seemed to me that, given the nature

of this book, there would have been inexcusable pedantry in inflicting the various versions of the drafts upon the reader. The picture is surely clear enough, without that.

I hope I may have succeeded in showing this picture to my readers, in giving them some idea of the character of that rare being as I knew him in life, and as he now, when I lay down my pen, stands vividly before my inward eye—with his subtle, sympathetic wisdom, his unassuming dignity, and his inexhaustible kindness of heart.

PREFACE

To the Second German Edition

AFTER little more than a year this second edition is called for. It is in all respects identical with the first. The numerous discussions which the book has caused in newspapers and magazines did not seem to require that I should make any change in my portrait. I have gladly made use of any informative details which have been imparted to me. With one exception, they all related to trifling matters which it is not worth while to specify here. The single exception to which I would call attention relates to my account of the "Pierson affair." Relying on the statements of one whom I could not but suppose to be well informed—because he was intimate with certain persons and affairs, and (amongst others) belonged to Count Hochberg's circle—I asserted as a fact that Privy Councillor Pierson, who brought a libel action against Prince Eulenburg, had taken his own life in order to evade the disclosure of his mismanagement. That statement is not supported by facts. According to the testimony of the doctor who attended him, Pierson died a natural death from heart-disease. While, as a matter of course, assigning its full value to this information, I have taken the opportunity of speaking more explicitly than in the first edition of the incident itself. I did not think it was indicated that I should go still more exhaustively into the question, and make use of the abundant memoranda at my disposal, in

which many persons are undesirably involved—for the affair would scarcely excite widespread interest at this time of day.

Since the appearance of the first edition two persons have died, who in the chapter on the Prince's trial played each a prominent part: Max Bernstein, the solicitor defending Maximilian Harden; and Wilhelm Mayer, the judge in the Harden-Städele case, in which incriminating statements made regarding the Prince had led to his being tried for perjury. Both men were alive when my book first appeared; both kept silence in face of the grave accusations therein made against them. My account is based on the conviction that in the first place the Städele case was a spurious one, artfully devised by the parties to it as the outcome of a secret understanding, in order that the proceedings might be transferred to Munich and there conducted in the Prince's absence; and that in the second place the judge in charge of the case connived at this, and was instrumental in procuring the desired result. For both of these opinions I can now furnish valuable confirmation.

In a posthumous tribute to Bernstein, the author of which gave it to be understood that he was a well-informed person (Dr. Richard Otto Frankfurter in the Berlin "*B.Z. am Mittag*" of March 9, 1925: No. 67), occurs the following reference to the Harden-Eulenburg trial: "When Prussian jurisdiction, under extreme pressure from Court, failed to reach any clear decision,[1] Max Bernstein managed to bring the case before a Bavarian jury, which at that time was the recognised tribunal for trials connected with the Press."[2] This suffi-

[1] This, as readers of my book are aware, is an untruth. Rather, it was the other way round.

[2] Erroneous. It was a Municipal Court.

ciently establishes the truth of what I have said—that the case was a spurious and malicious one, typical of what the Romans called a *turpis causa*, a discreditable action-at-law. On Bernstein's previous history we have an interesting sidelight in the information afforded in the same tribute—that he " counted among his clientèle members of the highest circles in Bavarian Society." Prince Eulenburg was always firmly convinced that in those " highest circles," where he was hated on account of his skilful and successful representation of German interests, the poisoned cup which was to destroy him had been concocted.

Now as to Judge Mayer. In the Prague *Bohemia* of April 19, 1925, we read (the author, Paul Gutmann, writes from his personal point of view) : " The artist in him was always to be admired no less than the judge. For many years a contributor in his spare time to *Fliegende Blätter*, *he was a dramatist in his manner of conducting a case*." What this phrase denotes, when stripped of its specious glitter, is clear enough. That judge knew how to, and loved to, conduct and wind up a case in the way that suited his dramatic sense. It is a confirmation of the verdict that I have delivered on the Städele trial. I had felt some diffidence about saying plainly what I, and no doubt many of my readers, thought—that in that trial there must have been some secret understanding beforehand between the judge and Harden's solicitor, Bernstein. I can now impart the information which Judge Mayer gave not long before his death to a foreign lawyer, when he was called upon to decide a disputed question : " In Bavaria it is customary for the judge, in certain cases, to hold consultations with the lawyers on both sides before the proceedings." Whether this is, or was, really a custom

among Bavarian judges, we need not discuss ; that Herr Mayer himself acted on the principle in the Städele case we can scarcely question after this avowal. On the same occasion he also confessed that it had indeed from the first been his intention to bring the truth to light in the Eulenburg case, which had for so long excited public interest. Thus the surprising course of the spurious Harden-Städele case is shown to have been no less to his liking than its dramatic outcome. It was a judicial murder, in which plaintiff and judge combined against an absent man.

In my picture the personality of the man who under William II was the arbiter of Germany's fate, is for the first time removed from the semi-obscurity in which it has hitherto been concealed, and placed in the broad daylight of history. I refer to Fritz von Holstein, the omnipotent leading spirit of the Foreign Office and of German policy, the evil genius of the German Empire, a subject for the pathologist, a criminal type.

Since then much has come to light about him which is not to his credit. But at the moment when I write these lines all Germany is stirred by the revelation that this man, whom even his adversaries and critics believed to be at least disinterested, was a common stock-jobber, who constantly misused his superior knowledge of secret political proceedings for his own enrichment. The light thus thrown upon the conduct of the political affairs of Germany need not here be discussed. But it cannot pass unnoticed in a biography of Prince Eulenburg that the character of the man who opposed, brought down, and utterly ruined him, is stamped as criminal by this latest contribution to Holstein's portrait. Anyone who may still have doubts as to whether Eulenburg was right

when in the middle 'nineties he frustrated Holstein's plots against the Emperor, will now have to acknowledge that the Prince, there also, was guided aright by his unerring intuition. History will assign him the credit for having prevented the helm of Government from being entrusted, without let or hindrance, to a man who—apart from everything else—was capable of betraying duty and conscience in the service of the State for the sake of dirty money.

EARLY YEARS

I

TEMPERAMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

THE birth and earliest impressions of the man depicted in these pages were of a paradoxical nature. In his home there were elements deriving from the opposite poles of German life. The father, Count Philip Eulenburg, was a thorough-paced Old Prussian, and had served as adjutant to the elder Wrangel, a friend of his own father's youth. He was a hard-bitten, conscientious soldier and an amusing companion, but of limited education and narrow views. The mother, Alexandrine von Rothkirch, was a woman of artistic temperament, with fine taste in music, and (as her works testify) a most accomplished painter. She, too, was daughter to a friend of Wrangel's youth ; but her home was in Silesia, the province which of all the older parts of the Kingdom was least Prussian in character. Moreover, she was closely connected with Austrian circles ; her sister was married to the nephew—a Hess also—of Field-Marshal Hess, who fought in 1848-9, as Chief of Staff under Radetzky, through the Revolution in Italy ; and in 1850 was selected to lead the victorious Austrian army against Prussia, a task of which he was relieved by the voluntary submission of that country at Olmütz.

The childhood of Philip Eulenburg, who was born on February 12, 1847, was much affected by these contrasts. Yet they were insignificant by comparison with another dissonance which was to

follow him throughout life, and finally die away in a jarring discord.

He inherited from his mother a subtle and tenderly emotional nature, a confessedly sensitive disposition. Even physically he possessed unusual delicacy of perception. He had the faculty of scenting the presence of snakes from a great distance, and this had manifested itself in extreme physical discomfort ever since the day in his childhood when one of these creatures had slid from a fruit-tree on to his person. The sensibility of his nature made his early youth a very troubled period ; he suffered more from the sorrows of others than from his own. "Even as a child I was possessed by unbounded sympathy. . . . To help was ever my dearest joy." And in his old age he wrote to a friend who had told him of some pitiful case : "I have always had too soft a heart, and the suffering of others was ever my deepest affliction. I don't mind confessing that the only good hours of my very arduous life were those in which I could give some help to others."

Besides this, he was from youth extremely averse from any kind of publicity. The prospect of having to make a speech to the tenants on his own family-estate would unnerve him ; and when as Ambassador in Vienna he addressed the German colony on the Emperor's birthday, in a speech which was rapturously applauded, he recorded in his diary : "I really know nothing that is more distasteful to me than speaking in public. That I am quite able to do it, and always have a success on such occasions, does not spare me one atom of the torture I undergo." Even to be present at the performance of his own plays was an ordeal to him.

The faculty of suffering and sympathising with

suffering is, however, always counterbalanced by an equally marked faculty for enjoyment. Philip Eulenburg's was a deeply enthusiastic nature. Even in the last years of his life, broken by illness and crushing sorrow, he could be entranced by a beautiful view, an interesting book, a pleasant bit of news, a meeting with an old friend. Anyone who saw him a few weeks before his death, delighted by a musical composition which was new to him—anyone who heard him express his gratitude for that pleasure—might have believed himself in the presence of a young man. Would that all the youths of our present age were but half so ardent for everything that is beautiful, great, and good as was he!

In many respects he really seemed to belong to another age. Most of all in his reverence for friendship. It was to him the highest of earthly relations. He thought of it precisely as Schiller did:

> Wem der grosse Gut gelungen,
> Eines Freundes Freund zu sein.[1]

In his affectionate, enthusiastic heart there was room for infinitely many, and very diversified, attachments. He himself once recorded with amusement what somebody had said of him: "If all Philip Eulenburg's dear pals were collected in one room, there would be no end of a row." He sought and found them in all sorts of places, on the summit of the throne and in the depths of the "lower classes," among women and men, youth and age; always ready to appreciate genuine worth, to see the good and indulgently—perhaps too indulgently—overlook the evil. He who was otherwise so keen an observer, with a merciless eye

[1] "He to whom the grace is given,
Friend of loyal friend to be."

for anything in the smallest degree ridiculous—he who for all the liveliness of his imagination possessed to so unusual an extent the faculty of seeing men and things as they were—was inclined to over-estimate his friends, so much so that he lost the power of criticising them. In many whom he thought to be loyal, he was bitterly deceived ; by others he allowed his friendship to be positively abused—*he* never failed in loyalty to any, and even in the instances where he had learnt a rough lesson could never quite bury the remembrance of earlier days. Standing on the threshold of old age, disillusioned by all he had known of envy, hatred, and treachery from one-time friends, he (in 1900) reminiscently summarised his experiences in these fine words :

> " And yet—from the deepest depths of my heart I sing the praise of friendship ! For a man without a friend is like a musical instrument that is never sounded. A friend draws from the heart of a man its purest and noblest harmonies, and exalts him above himself by their resonance. Love can do this only when it is transformed into friendship."

It is easy to understand that a man of this kind could not but feel an alien in the keen, brisk atmosphere of an Old Prussian environment. Philip Eulenburg always remained an alien in the circles to which by birth and manner of life he belonged—one whom others regarded as not wholly assimilated, and who himself knew that he did not really fit in. He used to say laughingly that only his great height and his witty talk enabled him to hold his own in those surroundings. He was popular because of his wit, though he was feared for it too. Wit and brilliant conversational gifts

were his mental inheritance from his father, for whose sake he was from youth a welcome figure in every social gathering—a favourite companion among the Guards' officers, an equally favourite comrade with the students in Strasburg and Leipzig, and in later years a dominant personality in Court and diplomatic society. As a *raconteur* he was unsurpassed. Anecdote or narrative of his own experiences—whichever it was, his way of telling it (sometimes, it is true, of transforming it in the telling) had incomparable fascination, and for all who knew him is unforgettable. How little the gay manner, the amusing stories, corresponded to his inward feelings was suspected by no one. Behind the laughing mask was concealed a grave, often a sorrowful, countenance. "The keynote of my nature is melancholy," he confessed. "My cheerfulness, my sense of the comical have always had an echo: 'Ach, ich armer Hanswurst!'[1] The primitive jokes and laughter of my father, and of my uncle Fritz Eulenburg, always induced in me a mournful state of self-analysis. I was like both in the exercise of my social talents, but I was an actor and they were sincere."

Even in early youth he was more drawn to his mother's relatives than to his vigorous father and his East Prussian forebears. His Rothkirch grandfather, though as a volunteer rifleman he had brought home from the Wars of Liberation the Iron Cross and the Russian Cross of St. George, was of pacific temper and very far from being a militarist; he could quote the classics, speak Italian, and converse upon the artistic treasures of Rome. Still more congenial was his old great-uncle Karl von Hertefeld (he died in 1867), last

[1] "Alas, poor Yorick!"

representative of a race of the Lower Rhine country, who could trace his family history and his estates therein back to the grey dawn of time; and, transplanted by the Great Elector to the Mark, had there rendered the State important service—a *grand seigneur* with a broad outlook, wealthy, much travelled, highly cultured, and with a heart of gold. Liebenberg, this uncle's castle in the Ukermark—furnished in the Dutch manner by the first Hertefeld (who gained it under the Great Elector in 1652) and carefully kept up by later generations, a marvellous oasis in that charmless region—was the boy's true home, his earthly paradise. That this estate eventually became his own by inheritance he gratefully felt to be the greatest of favours from destiny; and he enjoined on his children to bear in mind what it signified "that God should have given us a quite extraordinary piece of happiness, a definite, actual joy, in our home of Liebenberg. . . . Breathe in your prayers: 'We have Liebenberg, our splendid home, that God bestowed on us one day, without our deserving it, for our solace, our enjoyment, our refreshment.'" From his uncle Hertefeld he also received after his confirmation the watchword which, given in that sacred hour, was to be the lodestar of his life: "Love thy brethren!" Forty years afterwards he wrote of the incident in his memoirs for his children and heirs: "Love thy brethren! God knows that these words have been the guiding ones of my life. And by God! blessings will hover above Liebenberg only so long as these words abide in the heart of him who may at any time be its master."

But the greatest influence of all, from his earliest youth, was his mother. His peculiar relation to her was the keynote of his whole life. He loved

her, adored her, shared everything with her, as did she with him, so long as she lived ; even when at a distance they kept up an almost daily correspondence. He regarded it as the greatest of mercies that she was spared to him until the beginning of his old age ; after her death she was constantly in his thoughts, and he lived in sure and certain hope of their reunion. The days he could spend quietly at Gastein or some other peaceful place, alone with his mother, he reckoned as his dearest and best : " The Fortunate Isle in the raging sea that represents my extraordinary life—and is gradually undermining it." To Herbert Bismarck he wrote (in 1888, during the serious illness of Princess Bismarck) : " We have both had mothers who could be to us as a pattern of what womanly character is and ought to be." And when death had taken her from him (in 1902) he depicted her life and character in deeply-moved words for his relations and friends. To the Empress's letter of condolence he replied : " The merciful God has granted me strength to bear my affliction, for I have never been more profoundly conscious of my faith and glad assurance of eternal life than in these heavy hours. . . . And how gracious was the Lord in giving me that supreme and glorious hour—an hour like that of Holy Communion—when my mother died in my arms ! That should sustain and uplift me through all the future. I will try to be brave in its strength." Intimate outpourings, not intended for the eyes of strangers, prove how often afterwards he found solace and support in the thought of his mother, even in the almost actual vision of her, when sorrow and anguish overwhelmed him. We can understand his believing in all seriousness that a son had never so loved a mother.

From his mother, too, he inherited what was

most characteristic of him, and in his own conviction was designed to be the deepest expression of his nature—his rich artistic endowment. "I could never put into words," he wrote in a self-analysis of 1901, "what the world of the imagination meant to me in childhood and youth. It was so powerful an influence that external life could not but represent a contrast which manifested itself in dissatisfaction and inward unrest. The narrow world in which my parents lived at that time, my father's perpetual injunctions to reduce expenses, filled me with bitterness." He suffered severely, as he grew up, from the fact that his superabundant imaginative powers had not been concentrated on steady, serious work, and given a firm direction. It is true that his astonishing versatility, his well-nigh universal endowments, in themselves constituted a great obstacle. He was able to choose between being a musician, a painter, an architect, or a poet. In all these departments he showed himself capable of real achievement.

As the writer and composer of his *Rosenlieder* he is now best known to the larger German public, and will not soon be forgotten in that character. The Rose Songs have already been published in more than 500,000 impressions, to say nothing of the numerous arrangements for every practicable instrument. What other composer of our time can boast of a similar success? And yet these songs are neither the most original nor the most powerful of Eulenburg's compositions. He himself rated more highly, and with justice, his ballads from the Nordic Sagas, the *Skaldengesänge*. He wrote them for performance by himself, and published them only at the request of Emperor William II. It is from these that one really learns to appreciate him. Lacking though they may be in much that

belongs to true masterpieces and outlasts the changes of taste, they do show a faculty for dramatic characterisation and an unerring sense for the right use of his material which make it easily comprehensible that the greatest singers, such as Niemann, Marianne Brandt, and others, should have chosen them for performance and filled whole programmes with them alone. Both as singer and composer Eulenburg was entirely self-taught. He never had a lesson in musical theory and composition. A well-known composer to whom, on being questioned, he confessed this fact, flatly refused to believe him, and was almost rude about it. How great must have been the inborn gift which could achieve so much without any instruction.[1]

To be able to sing without lessons may not perhaps be a miracle. But to build houses which are beautiful to look at from more than one point of view, which stand fast and can be lived in—who would be supposed likely to do that without being initiated into the secrets of the craft? Eulenburg never attended any school of architecture, and yet he is proved a born architect by the monumental Roman hall at the Castle and the stately Water Pavilion (*Seehaus*) at Liebenberg—that bit of Italy transplanted to the Ukermark. Both were erected, without any expert assistance, under his personal supervision and entirely from his own designs, by local builders. He was undoubtedly on the right path when in youth he desired above all things to become a professional architect, though even in old age he regretted more than anything else that destiny had prevented him from giving the German

[1] The German public believed him—incredibly—to be also the originator of the atrocious *Sang an Ægir*. He had nothing whatever to do with that production.

nation a really national opera, which he felt that he had it in him to do.

Those who knew him intimately saw in him pre-eminently the writer; and a writer by the grace of God he certainly was. His abundance and facility were amazing. In the train, on board ship, in the whirl of social life, he would write his verses, his tales. A ballad that he wished to dedicate to the Emperor for Christmas was written in the railway-station between two trains. Moreover, he had the gift of improvisation. He could extemporise long narratives, on such occasions as an illness when his children gathered round his bed—narratives which only needed to be written down to qualify as finished works of art. The charming children's story of *Erich und Erika* was composed in this way. Even as Ambassador in Vienna, where the ordinary course of his duties and his very heavy responsibilities almost overwhelmed him, he often found time for the minor *vers d'occasion* with which he loved to enliven festivities at home. For poetical composition came so easy to him that it seems to have filled the intervals of work spontaneously, once he could give himself up to his imagination. That he was something more, and did something more, than what can be attributed to a "gifted dilettante" no one who knows his two dramas can deny. Were it not so, would the most prominent theatres have troubled to produce them? He had his first triumph with the play *Margot* at the Embassy Theatre in Munich. His *Seestern* (*Star of the Sea*), a passionate love-tragedy with unmistakable echoes of Ibsen, was performed several times with great success under the pseudonym of Ivar Svenson in December, 1887, at the Royal Theatre; in 1890 given again at Weimar and Neustrelitz; and in 1897 even the recognised

expert, Georg v. Hülsen, thought the piece worth fresh study at Wiesbaden, where it was put on in a brilliant revival. About the Wiesbaden performance the Grand Duke Karl Alexander, likewise a connoisseur on the subject, wrote the same evening (March 28, 1890) to the author: "I enjoyed your work from beginning to end with unfailing interest . . . and delight, which increased as it went on. . . . You were right not to hide your light under a bushel, for the poet is not endowed for his own sake only."

But Eulenburg gave of his best—and it is characteristic of him—in his children's stories and his shorter tales. Many of them are masterpieces in their kind. Herr v. Holstein, the evil genius of the Foreign Office, was in literature as in things of the table an epicure, and certainly no flatterer even to his friends. But with Eulenburg's little tales he was enchanted. About the *Abenderzählungen* (*Fireside Stories*) he wrote in December, 1893: "The story is a picture that only a lover of Nature could have given us. The sketch of the little mother tormented by anxiety about her son is consummate. You are fine in the sobriety of your method—the situation is clearly delineated in so few strokes." And again later, in May, 1895: "I envy you one thing—the gift of temporarily moving in a world of your own creation, and giving so masterly a picture of it. Last week, when I was so dog-tired, I read several of your sketches, for they did me good. *Fraülein Rose!* But the crown is after all the *Weihnacht im Kloster* (*Christmas in a Monastery*)."

We may question the rank which Philip Eulenburg would have attained in German literature if he had been able to devote himself entirely to authorship. That is a matter of proportion and taste. The facile and disparaging dismissal of him

as a " dilettante " is wholly beside the mark ; he was more than that, he was able and a good craftsman —his was a genuine talent.

Even those who have not had a like experience can at least divine what it means to be prevented from fully developing any of these rich endowments —to find that what is felt to be the real man and the true aim of existence is indulgently regarded as a side issue—to be able to cultivate it merely as an occasional decoration. It means a lifelong martyrdom which can be made endurable only by great and lasting successes in other spheres of activity.

To this martyrdom Eulenburg saw himself condemned by the obstinate will of his father, who with the narrow outlook of an Old Prussian aristocrat stopped his son's approach to the temple of the arts. He saw in his eldest boy only the future Minister. And the son had not the courage—how many young men of seventeen have it ?—to put forth his own strength, and defiantly enter upon the path which his nature pointed out to him. " I was never one of your strong characters," he once confessed ; " and yet I was not a weakling." That he was not a weakling he proved by at any rate not allowing himself to be forced into a profession which was profoundly distasteful to him.

How, before his education was finished, he was flung, by the outbreak of the War of 1866, into the military calling, and after two and a half years, " embittered by the torment of unfair, narrow-minded, and coarse-natured superiors," escaped from it, took his degree, studied law, tried his luck in the courts, to be finally (in 1877) landed in the diplomatic service through the influence of the Bismarck family—all this he has himself told us.[1]

[1] *Aus 50 Jahren, Erinnerungen, Tagebücher und Briefe*, etc. (Berlin, 1923).

In another place, in a portrait of himself set down for his children as a lesson, a warning, an exhortation, he speaks of the inward conflicts connected with these outward changes of purpose Of the Old Prussian régime he had in his early youth, when the East Prussian nobility was still suffering from the bitter poverty inflicted by the Napoleonic wars, experienced only the harsh and repressive side, against which his sensitive imaginative nature revolted. In military life it was still worse. "O powerful, noble Prussianism," he exclaimed, recalling those days, "why had one of your most easily-inspired sons to feel only your claws, and not the kindness of your heart?"

Let him speak further for himself:

"Then came the July of 1870. With ineffable excitement I hastened to join my regiment at Potsdam, only to find myself—so long seconded as I had been—quite justly relegated to the reserve squadron. I was utterly wretched about this; and one day, when I met my father with a regiment on its way to France, I burst into tears. 'What are you crying about, may I ask?' he coldly inquired. 'Can't you understand how I suffer from having to stay at home?' I answered with a sense of profound bitterness. In the past he had wanted me to feel as Prussian as he did—and now that I did, he could not understand me! Perhaps he thought I should be no good at the front. Yet I ended by bringing back the Iron Cross. That pleased him. However, this war brought me to my senses. In the great German upheaval I, too, became a German, a true German, who nevertheless is also proud of belonging to the race which made the new Germany—proud of being a Prussian."

But from these youthful experiences there remained something which made him see and estimate a great many things quite differently from the people who surrounded him. All his life he was a keen and often a severe critic of the somewhat one-sided military outlook, as evidenced by the supremacy of the Guards, their privileged position, their frequent and ostentatious arrogance, which was by no means always justified by their personal attributes ; and he had no illusions about the dangers awaiting persistence in this obsolescent régime. " The first Prussian King," he wrote in 1901, " who proclaims himself King of his troops of the line, and lets his Princes serve not in the Guards but in the various other branches of the Army, and chooses his *maison militaire*—his Headquarters Staff (!)—from line regiments exclusively, will do more for his House, his country, and civilisation in general than all the Imperial Chancellors on earth. He will breathe fresh life into the Prussian Kingdom, and will soon find out where the real power lies. A *wise* King of Prussia and German Emperor will be quick to perceive the significance of being King of the troops of the line. For the Guards are an anachronism, just as certain exclusive University cliques are."

Many a pungent criticism of this kind is plainly to be deduced from the silent battles which Eulenburg for long had to fight with these particular elements. In his conflict with those whom he held to be caricatures of the true Prusso-German type he suffered not a few wounds and—to his own sense, at least—was finally vanquished. Is it to be wondered at that in the end he became bitter, possibly unjust as well ?

But for all that he never wavered in his Prussian feeling. Unforgettable for me is a conversation

which I was privileged to have with him a few days before his death. Moved by some recently revised passages in his own memoirs, which were much inspired by criticism of the Prussian regulations, he expressed himself thus : " It is a grief to me that people should, because of such utterances, regard or represent me as hostile to the Prussian State. Nothing is further from my thoughts ! No one is more filled with admiration for all that Prussia was and has achieved. For what is greater, after all, than for a State to train its citizens, its people, in the idea that they must do their duty in any and every circumstance? And what State can compare with Prussia in that respect ? "

I could only answer : " You are right, Your Excellency, and you yourself are the best proof of it. For even you, who were by nature no Prussian in the usual sense of the word, have sacrificed your real self to your duty, inspired by the thought of King and Country."

" True," answered the Prince. " I have sacrificed myself to the point of self-annihilation. I owe it to the Prussian discipline that I was able to do so. No, nothing shall prevail over the State of Prussia ! "

To those of his children who had grown up abroad he once gave a similar warning : " A negro can never be a white man, nor a white man a negro. Don't forget that. Give to Prussia what it rightly claims from you, and hold fast to the ideal which to this day it represents, as an example of power, integrity, simplicity, loyalty, capacity for devotion. Don't despise the simple Prussian ways which constitute its best strength, and weigh cosmopolitan polish against Prussian common-sense."

What must have been the effect on him, when he was reproached with being hostile to the Army and publicly disparaging its officers ! That happened

in 1894, as the result of a little story which he had written in 1876, and published in 1882 in *Nord und Süd*, and again at the Christmas season of 1883 in a collection, and of which the newspapers got hold. It told of a young lieutenant who had got into bad company and squandered the money which his poor mother had saved for him. The tale was based on fact, was intended as a warning, and was at first gratefully regarded as such by military circles. The author was urged to write more in a similar strain. But when it became newspaper talk, there were some devotees of red-tape among the highly-placed officers who thought fit to be indignant. Eulenburg was actually called to account by an Imperial aide-de-camp of this type. He thought it his duty to obviate a scandal by laying the whole case before the Emperor, and succeeded in his aim. It was sufficient for him to state emphatically: "That I, who am second to none in upholding our splendid Army, our rock of defence and our pride . . . should now be suspected of machinations against it, is as senseless as it is ridiculous!" [1]

[1] This long-forgotten affair might have been passed over in silence had not Field-Marshal Count Waldersee in his Memoirs (vol. II, p. 317) given expression to his indignation at this attack "on the prestige of the officers." A surprisingly narrow view in a man of such high standing.

II

THE DIPLOMAT

EULENBURG ultimately entered the diplomatic service—as he himself confesses, with the idea that this profession would give him time for artistic work. He could not know that he was thereby setting foot on a path which, if it were not to be that of art, was at any rate to afford the best opportunity for using his abilities to the general advantage.

People have but a confused idea of what a diplomat is and ought to be. They conceive of him as a supple courtier, who has up the sleeve of his dress-coat an endless supply of lies, intrigues, and basenesses of every kind ; a man whom neither friend nor foe can trust as far as they can throw him, who uses speech for the sole purpose of concealing his thoughts, and takes the greatest delight in setting other people by the ears—in short, a chartered mischief-maker. And certainly there are bad diplomats who so understand their calling. The good diplomat takes a different view. If, as Bismarck said, the foreign policy of every country consists in the art of avoiding war as long as is compatible with honour, and if the diplomat is the instrument of that art, his task lies rather in conciliation, mediation, staving-off—that is to say in the more placable kind of activities. He is there to observe and negotiate. The better he can do both, the more perfectly he will represent the ideal of his profession.

In this sense Philip Eulenburg was a born

diplomat. His artistic faculties were the very things that served him best—his fine powers of observation, his faculty for entering into and divining the feelings of others, for putting himself in their place, his instinctive grasp of connections which do not appear on the surface—in short, everything which is commonly described as intuition. It might also be called perception, that sixth sense which to him who possesses it reveals in a flash many things which reflection would never succeed in discovering. To this he joined a positively miraculous capability for adapting himself to others and winning them over to his side. Few men have ever been so irresistible a " charmer " as he was. Those who envied him regarded this as craft and cunning ; yet it was no more than a radiant projection of his most essential traits—kind-heartedness and love of humanity. The poet's saying :

> Weil ich alles Leben ehre,
> Schauen mich die Geister an,[1]

was entirely verified in him ; it was because he had understanding and sympathy for everyone he met that so many were strongly attracted to him.[2] He inspired confidence to such a degree that now and then it oppressed him to be father-confessor to so many people. There is no need to point out what that meant for a diplomat. If to this is added a clear, swift, and extremely subtle intelligence, unsurpassable certainty of touch in social matters, but as well punctilious conscientiousness and love of

[1] " Since to me all lives are sacred.
Spirits gaze into these eyes."

[2] The Emperor William II remarked that in Eulenburg alone he " found the power of grasping the inmost significance of everything, even the most heterogeneous matters."

order, together with an unusual business-sense—an inheritance from his father and a long ancestry of highly-placed officials and Ministers, which made him in important matters the adviser and friend in need to all his relatives, near and distant; and finally the capacity, when necessary, to be very firm and without any wounding severity make himself strongly felt . . . we have before us a picture of the diplomat as he ought to be.

His peculiar fitness for the profession was, therefore, evident from an early age; and later, when his opportunities were more extensive, was fully recognised by friends and superiors in the service. It was no common sign of appreciation that Bismarck, when Eulenburg was a young attaché and had given no proofs of his ability, should have entrusted him with the management of Prussian affairs at the Dresden Court. Tributes from the by no means easily satisfied Holstein, in later years, leave no room for doubt. "It is my opinion," he wrote in November, 1890, referring to ambassadorial appointments at Petersburg, "that Radolin and you are the only two of the younger generation of diplomats who have the requisite international *usage du monde*." In July, 1893: "Your handling of men is simply unrivalled." In February, 1892: "You are endowed by nature with the knack of making palatable unpleasant truths." The most valuable of all tributes was that from his friend Bernard von Bülow, who was best qualified to appreciate him by his intimate knowledge, and his own distinguished career as a diplomat. He wrote in March, 1890:

> "It is truly a strange dispensation that you, who seemed by inclination and development destined as few are to an æsthetic career, should

now stand amid the foam and spatter of diplomatic rivalries. I can well imagine that, profound and subtle as you are, you often look back longingly to the peaceful vales of Parnassus where the Muses weave their choric measures, so much more harmonious than the devil-dance of conflicting interests. But the older we grow, the more we recognise that the apparently senseless zigzag of our earthly existence follows a line drawn by a higher Power, the continuity of which we can only gradually perceive, and which leads us whither Providence would have us go. In my view, your literary temperament peculiarly fits you for your present sphere of action. You have the poet's intuition, the writer's observation, which discern and perceive many a thing that escapes the intellect ; you have great knowledge of men and great skill in handling them. You have, besides, the writer's open mind, which does not torment itself with petty distinctions ; and a very unusual absence of self-seeking—in short, you have everything that is humanly lovable, noble, and not very frequently to be found at the green table. So you must not lament over the many difficulties and temptations of your present position of trust. You are the very person to fill it, because of your characteristic abilities and qualities."

In January, 1881, Eulenburg received his first appointment as third Secretary to the German Embassy in Paris. He remained there barely six months. On November 20, 1875, he had married Augusta, Countess von Sandels, granddaughter of the Swedish Field-Marshal Count Sandels, who in the history of his country occupies a similar position to Blücher's in that of Prussia. The Countess

Augusta had distinguished herself, even as a young girl, by her eager partisanship for Prussia and Germany—so much so that the anything but Germanophil King Karl XV had once said to her in her father's house : " I command you to hate that infernal Prussia ! " For her husband's artistic activities she, who had a marked talent for painting, felt the fullest sympathy. By her whole nature, her selfless devoted love, she made the lasting happiness of her husband. He often spoke of that happiness, and paid her tribute in words of glowing warmth and deep sincerity. Referring to the death of a relative whose life was ruined by an incompatible marriage, he wrote to her : " Ah, how humbly I thank God for his mercy in letting me find *you !* " And as an aging man he drew the moral for his children :

> " Not of passions, not of the imperious surging of tempestuous love may I—as weak a creature as yourselves—speak to you as in the words of wisdom. But I *may* tell you of the great sanctuary of my life, which also is love—and such love ! When I sing the praises of that kind of love—the Song of Songs—the strings sound wonderfully rich and full. Two great affections fill my life with their pure radiance, their gentle glow—that between me and your mother, and that between me and my own mother. That you might not go astray, God gave you to see, to understand, that kind of love. You grew up with that around you ; in that picture your maturer years were set ; to that example may you attain ! "

But the first years of marriage were only too often clouded. The first child, a son, died at the

age of eighteen months ; the second, a daughter, fell ill soon after their arrival in Paris, and she too died when she was nearly two years old. This made the parents' sojourn in Paris a painful one. So it was fortunate that Eulenburg was the friend of Herbert Bismarck, and even at such a time found strength to be a sympathetic counsellor in his grievous love-tragedy. It was partly, indeed, out of gratitude for this that Herbert, so soon as the July of 1881, effected Eulenburg's transfer to Munich. The best thing he brought away from Paris was his intimate friendship with Bernard von Bülow, subsequently Prince and Imperial Chancellor, who was then at the Embassy as second Secretary. How intimate the colleagues were is shown by their correspondence in the following years. Eulenburg was, as so often, his friend's confidant in a serious and complicated situation ; and in after-life he was always glad to remember that he had helped him with advice, and taken successful steps to overcome the obstacles which stood in the way of Bülow's happiness. Bülow, on his side, was unreservedly grateful. "Dearest friend," he wrote in July, 1881, "I know how entirely I can depend on you . . . I miss our talks very much indeed. You are the only man with whom I have ever spoken of this matter, or ever will." And later in May, 1883 : "It is just in such difficult situations as this that it is a real blessing to know that there are friends who feel with one, sympathise, understand. . . . How good and dear it was of you to intercede for me so wisely ! Dearest friend, I shall *never* forget it ! " And in August : "I think a great deal about you, to whom I felt drawn from the first moment, and who share my inward life as not many do."

With the transfer to Munich began the years

which Eulenburg afterwards regarded as the fairest and happiest of his life. He there found an excellent Chief in the intellectual and highly-cultured Ambassador, Count Georg von Werthern-Beichlingen, with whom he at once entered into the friendliest possible relations. His official work was not too exacting, and left him plenty of time for other occupations. Nevertheless it was not unpleasing to the young Secretary that every year, when the Ambassador took his summer holiday, he should himself be entrusted with the Embassy business. At all times his special duty was to cultivate social relations with the Court and the Bavarian aristocracy (no difficult task for him, with his talents and his whole temperament, despite some complications and contrarieties); for the Ambassador himself resorted almost exclusively to the society of artists and *savants*. But among these also Eulenburg was thoroughly at home. He was a central figure in the extremely active intellectual life of Munich during the 'eighties. Here he found stimulation and encouragement for his artistic production, which he now began to practise as a secondary vocation. And on his private life the sunshine of domestic happiness shone uninterruptedly. In September, 1881, there was added to the daughter already possessed the longed-for heir and representative of the family name; and two sons and two daughters followed between this and 1886.

Nevertheless there were some clouds. His keener participation in literary and artistic life fostered Eulenburg's wish to turn his back on the diplomatic career, and devote himself entirely to writing. His friends did not fail to persuade him in the same sense; Bernard Bülow definitely urged him. On August 31, 1881, he wrote:

"At last I am able to thank you warmly for your delightful letter from Starnberg. The happy mood in which it was written was a real joy to me! May I, nevertheless, repeat my '*Ceterum censeo*'? Regard Munich as the *last stage* before the goal—namely, complete independence. The only state which is fit for a man of your individuality! It is your duty to strive towards it. For life is too short to absolve us from the obligation of throwing off those fetters which hinder *the development of our own peculiar faculties*. In that development lies the task assigned to each of us by destiny."

Later he repeated his exhortation:

"You are in the right channel, dear friend—stay in it until you land on what is for you the Fortunate Isle—exclusive devotion to the art for which you were born. I have always said . . . that the *Apollo in you* would ultimately break through all outward hindrances; I rejoice to find that I was right. So long as you feel that Munich helps towards your development, do not leave it; once that feeling deserts you, make the great decision: 'To new shores beckons a new day.'"

To this plan the same immutable obstacle opposed itself, which in early youth had made it impossible for him to choose the career that was native to him. Eulenburg was dependent on his father, whose views on this point had not altered. His material circumstances as head of a growing family on the meagre salary of a Secretary of Legation were, moreover, very restricted. A letter of later years bears witness to the "great crisis of his life," as he calls it:

"My official career as a diplomat was to me a torment. An artist every inch of me, and certain of success, I fought like a desperate creature against my father, who in his Old Prussian way recognised *nothing but an official career*, and looked upon all artistic activity as a pastime, a toy, for a Count Eulenburg. And materially I was wholly dependent on him; I could not throw my cap over the windmill, could not expose my dearly-loved wife and children—once it should have come to a rupture with my father—to a precarious income gained by music and authorship. During those agitated years of inward conflict and overflowing productiveness, stimulated by the artistic life of Munich, whose representatives so warmly and gladly regarded me as one of themselves (for I almost exclusively frequented those, to me, native circles) I would flee in desperation to the lake, leap from the boat into the azure flood, or ply my fishing-rod for many a dreamy hour until, remote from the battle, I drew from Nature's greatness, from the blue-green waters, from my literary and musical plans and fancies, a kind of tranquillity."

As years went on and recognition did not fail to come, when with the drama *Margot*—which in later life was by no means beloved by its author—his first stage triumph took place, the resolution to venture on the great plunge into freedom ripened to the full. Towards the end of the 'eighties he had got so far as to be on the point of resigning his post and the career as a whole, and turning author. But then two things happened to upset his plans.

In June, 1886, the dethronement and suicide of King Ludwig II fell like a thunderbolt into the tranquil waters of the Prussian Embassy at the

Court of Bavaria. Eulenburg, for the first time in his life, had the opportunity of taking part in a great political crisis, and learnt by experience that diplomacy, hitherto known to him only on its lesser pettifogging side, could be really interesting. On receipt of the news that a Commission of State had been despatched to Hohenschwangau to inform the King of his deposition, Eulenburg—conscientious and vigilant—immediately went to the place. He was thus an eye-witness of part of the proceedings, and heard the rest immediately afterwards from persons directly concerned. Chance also willed it that when, a few days later, the unhappy King put an end to his life at Schloss Berg on Lake Starnberg, Eulenburg, who was staying at his summer villa on the opposite side of the lake, was again the first to appear on the scene of the tragedy, and was able to inspect it narrowly.

As Count Werthern, soon after the catastrophe, went on leave as usual, the connections which had to be established between the new Regency and the Prussian and Imperial Government were at first entrusted to Eulenburg's hands. The Secretary of Legation at Munich thus for a time became a not entirely insignificant piece on Bismarck's chessboard of internal German policy ; his reports were interesting and important, and the business confided to him was not less so. The way he played his part in these critical days was instantly effective towards establishing his position in the Service. His reports attracted attention at the Foreign Office ; he was seen to be a diplomat of promise. " The complicated state of affairs " (so Eulenburg afterwards summarised his impressions) " gave the anti-Imperialists reason to hope that this was a favourable opportunity for attacking the stability of the Empire. Their headquarters were at the

Nuncio's in Munich ; France and Russia, as well as disaffected members of the Confederation, there formed a group."

The Prussian *chargé d'affaires* had had his eye on this from the first. Intimate as he was in all circles of Munich society, and on good terms with the foreign representatives of their various countries, it was easy for him to discover every kind of underground alliance. He gave Herbert Bismarck much information in private letters, both before and after the crisis. On June 13, 1886, immediately after the King's suicide, he wrote to Herbert Bismarck :

> " Here universal and profound perturbation rules the scene, and thousands of people have assembled before the Residency. Unfortunately there are also incessant complaints against the Government, which is said to have deposed a King who was *not* insane, and thus let him come to this lamentable end. Early to-day the troops of King Otto (! ! !) " (who was known to have been long hopelessly insane) " took the oath, not omitting the Imperial one in case of war—so the most important thing is in order. . . . When the Commission opened proceedings at Hohenschwangau on the 10th I went there in all haste, and utilised my return-journey with the members to study these gentlemen's nerves, which were completely shattered by the danger and anxiety. Holnstein assured me that Prince Leopold " (the Regent) " had a great admiration for the Emperor, but a deep distrust of the Crown Prince [1]—this by reason of certain utterances from the latter of the kind familiar to us all.

[1] Emperor Wilhelm I of Germany and the Crown Prince Frederick, afterwards Emperor.

Holnstein answered for it that Prince Leopold was entirely loyal in his feelings towards Germany, 'though to be sure he has a very limited outlook.' For a year and a half I have been personally *quite intimate* in Ultramontane circles. There I have picked up some queer things, and politically speaking I trust *not a single one* of them —not even (forgive me !) your friend Lerchenfeld. The haughty aristocracy would be useful to us only—if the Emperor should turn Catholic, and I think that's a long way off ! "

On June 18 :

" Our business now is to influence the Regent in such a sense that he will avert the anti-national storm which will follow upon the tranquillising of the public mind. For the moment, however, he is safe ; and I hope that the Crown Prince, whom he deeply distrusts, will dispel that distrust by amiability. This is of great importance. I shall inform the Crown Prince to-morrow, as soon as he arrives. . . . If we make use of the influence gained, we might, seeing the fear we inspire, do much by making it clear that the Regent would, by going over to the clerical camp, awaken our slight—great—extreme (according as it suits us !) distrust."

Herbert Bismarck answered from Homburg on June 22 :

" MY DEAR PHILI,

" Thank you very much indeed for your various interesting letters, the last of which I received to-day. The two previous ones I sent direct to my father, and *your reflections have been appreciated in the proper quarter.* My father also wishes that the present Ministry may be retained,

and is only afraid that its own incompetence may be destructive to it."

In this way the ice was broken, and Secretary of Legation Count Eulenburg was now employed in more important business than that of current affairs by the Bismarcks, father and son. Thus, when Bismarck was about to pass through Munich on his way to Gastein, Eulenburg received a message that the Chancellor would like, before the Munich sojourn, to inform himself of circumstances there by word of mouth, in a strictly private interview. A mark of the highest confidence was given in two letters of Herbert Bismarck's of the 11th and 18th of August.

"It was very useful, your going to see Prince William. He thinks a great deal of you, and has sung your praises to me in every kind of way. You must make use of this, and at Reichenhall talk to him again and get an influence over him. For the heaven-storming strain in most of his opinions must be more and more toned down, so that the Potsdam Lieutenant's outlook may gradually give way to statesmanlike reflections. Except for that, the Prince is really a pearl. Unfortunately his health again seems to me somewhat uncertain.

"And so you are going to be in Bayreuth with Prince William to-morrow. I hope you will distract his mind, so that the Wagnerian trombones may not damage his bad ear with their discords. Six hours of the Music of the Future would inflame even my drums. I am always afraid that the Prince will do too much, so energetic as he is in everything; and he must be prevented from that, for his health is of quite inestimable importance to the German nation."

The impression made on the Foreign Office by Eulenburg's activities at this time could not be better shown than by the fact that Baron von Holstein now entered into correspondence with him. The "sage of the political department" was wont to establish a subterranean wire, in the shape of a private correspondence, with those German representatives abroad from whom he could obtain something or of whom he wanted to make use; and this he tried to keep as secret as possible from their chiefs. He now opened an exchange of this kind with Eulenburg, whom hitherto he had known only from passing encounters in Bismarck's house. The letter, which was in the course of years to be followed by several hundred others, is characteristic.

"Berlin, *June* 13, 1886.

"MY DEAR COUNT,

"Herbert Bismarck recently showed me your letter concerning affairs in Bavaria; allow me to tell you that, without any further knowledge of those affairs, I instinctively believe your views to be correct. The Prince Regent, of whom I hear that he is a man to be respected, could in your opinion do nothing more unpractical than to replace the present Ministers, with whose feelings and peculiarities the German people are acquainted, by individuals who belong or *have belonged* to the Centre party—that is to say, to the group which acts upon the watchword: 'The Empire's embarrassment is our opportunity.' This then is the cardinal point. I am convinced that the Prince Regent will not effect this change, which possibly he desires, without encouragement from Berlin. Lerchenfeld—so Confederate circles are inclined to think—is

commissioned to foster these projects. How he means to set about it I do not precisely know, but in anything which is not his proper business he is remarkably clever, and unburdened by any superfluous scruples.

"The last twenty-four hours have brought me information that anxiety in loyal Confederate circles increases hourly. Consequently I am writing to Herbert, advising him to send your letters, should you write him any more, *directly* and *privately* to his father.

"I leave it to your judgment about mentioning—but not until *later on*—this letter to Herbert, but to *no one else*, without exception—not even to Werthern, in whose discretion I do not confide.

"With a sense that we, without knowing one another at all intimately, sing to the same tune in this national question, believe me

"Yours very sincerely,

"HOLSTEIN."

Anyone reading this singular document will form his own ideas about the writer. In the light of later events and vicissitudes it must have acquired a very peculiar interest for the recipient. Eulenburg in after years made the following note upon it :

"When I analyse this first letter, I perceive—and not without some gratified vanity—that the most remarkable brain next to Bismarck's was so impressed by my political grasp and style of exposition that he 'made up to me.' And in such a way that, without expressly saying so, he showed me that he thought me a man to be trusted. For in this first letter he, to a certain

extent, put himself in my power. I wish to put it on record that I have never made any use of the many weapons that I have against Holstein.

"My analysis of this Holstein letter leads me to the concluding words, which on the one hand request the utmost secrecy about the correspondence, and on the other seek to instil distrust of my highly-respected Chief, Count Werthern. Can he have been thinking of putting me in Werthern's place and 'getting rid' of the old man, if possible with my collusion? Such ideas could not but occur to me, when I remembered his conduct in the Arnim case. Anyhow, I did not choose to keep my correspondence with Holstein a secret—as he desired—from Count Werthern. That would have been disloyal. Werthern merely smiled his well-known smile, and said: 'Be careful! Holstein is a dark horse.'"

We cannot wonder that the Secretary of Legation at Munich eagerly responded to this overture from the influential Privy Councillor. So in the following weeks there ensued a correspondence from which one may give the most interesting of Eulenburg's communications.

"Liebenberg, *July* 13, 1886.

"The more the question of a new representative at the Prussian Embassy is discussed, the more clearly I perceive its importance. An unwise choice may be very injurious to us. For example—I will assume that a new Ambassador loses the sympathy of the German nationals, which would happen at once with any sort of brusque handling, or even merely because of a Prussian attitude. From that moment he would find himself, politically speaking, 'in the air,' and without anything to fall back upon, for

straightforward cohesion with the Ultramontane nobility will *never* be possible. I have myself—after four years—at last sung my way into those circles, and made valuable friendships. But I am under no illusions of any kind, and know that *nevertheless* there is an abyss between me and these people, even though they have permitted me frequently to invite myself to luncheon and tea.

"The Bavarian Ministry has the same sort of susceptibility towards certain North-German manners and customs, whether it be Liberal-Conservative as now, or Ultramontane as it may be. This excessive susceptibility makes people, from the moment they feel offended—and they very easily feel offended!—accessible to the insinuations of those elements whose *one and only* interest it is to combat Prussian influence in Bavaria. These are the Nuncio, and the French and Russian Ambassadors. Likewise our allies of Austria and Saxony, as I need not tell you. *All* these people hang their hopes on the Ultramontanes; they are completely at home in those circles, for their sympathies are fully in accord with the endeavours of the diplomats.

"In times of peace an unsympathetic personality at the Prussian Embassy would in my opinion involuntarily assist the anti-German undermining operations; and the skirmishes of political officialdom, gradually ensuing, would culminate in unpleasantness in the *Bundesrat*. But so soon as a *great* political catastrophe should put Germany to the proof—defeat in war, dangerous hostile alliances, and so forth—an ill-chosen personality as Prussian Ambassador would have a directly Separatist effect, while a representative enjoying the sympathy of the

Bavarian Government would be able to play an extremely important part. . . .

"I have imparted these ideas to you without any idea of any definite person, solely out of interest in the matter, which lies very near to my heart. 'Friendly energy' seems to me the word of the enigma for internal German policy; and the men representing that policy ought, by their character and work, to incarnate that phrase."

The possibility here discussed was not to become an actuality for two years, but it hovered on the horizon all that time, and must naturally have excited Eulenburg's lively interest. If in the events of the summer of 1886 he had learnt the interesting side of diplomacy, he must after such stirring times have felt the ordinary routine of the Embassy, with its trivial "current events" and its often no less trivial "big shows" and "social occasions," to be doubly oppressive. He knew now that there were other things in the diplomatic career, and he knew, too, that he could make himself felt in them. If there was actually to be a change in the person of his Chief, nothing was more natural than that he should wish to be transferred to a post with more to do. He wrote to Bernard Bülow about this on February 28, 1887:

"For me the Royal catastrophe has been serviceable—in the first place because it gave me the opportunity of assisting at one of the most remarkable events of recent years; and in the second because it offered me some work which—having succeeded in it—has given me a certain taste for a career which formerly I had almost angrily disliked. For this reason I should now like to consider changing my post, for there is

no prospect of another King's drowning himself, and so I am finding it rather deadly."

With Herbert Bismarck, too, the question was mooted. A letter to him of July 19, 1887, runs :

"To your remark that you had hitherto believed you were doing me a service by leaving me in Munich, I can only answer that I have always been filled with gratitude to you *for that very reason*. For me and mine nothing could have been better than Munich. But you will easily understand that under the influence of the first threatening white hair, I must *sometime* consider a change. N.B.—If I am likely to be any use."

But in the background there still lurked, all the while, the idea of an untrammelled literary life. It would perhaps after all have been realised, but for the second circumstance which gave Philip Eulenburg's existence the decisive turn.

III

THE EMPEROR'S FRIEND

IN May, 1886, Philip Eulenburg came into close contact with Prince William, and a cordial friendship sprang up between the young man who was one day to wear the crown, and the mature artist-diplomat. His Memoirs tell us how it came about. In another passage from his later reminiscences there is this :

" My attitude towards Prince William was cordial yet circumspect, when in 1886 his friendship for me became ecstatic. He was twelve years my junior, and when I made his acquaintance, his father was going about in exuberant health. My attitude was cordial, because his enthusiasm for my music and my musical performances, which almost feverishly delighted him, was congenial to my artistic soul, and very likely flattered my vanity as well. Which of us is without vanity ? Not even the most modest of men, for *he* is proud of his modesty. But I also felt cordial towards the Prince because he entered so frankly not only into my artistic interests, but all the others, and, moreover, showed so warm and eager a sympathy with my ardent love for wife and children that it might have been his personal possession.

" His too intimate connection with Potsdam, where—because of his difficult relations with his parents—he felt a sort of domestic tie with the First Regiment of Guards and the Hussars of the

Guard, was to me a source of anxiety. But as I myself had belonged to the Guards from 1866 to 1871, and was very far from wishing to distress the Prince with my personal experiences in that capacity, there was no real drawback there. My close friendly relations with Herbert Bismarck and his family-circle were also a natural bond between the Prince and myself. But I must lay stress on the fact that our friendship, during its earlier phase, was based essentially on art. I could not feel anything but warm-hearted towards this enthusiastic being, so quick of apprehension as he was, though even then my friendship with the future Emperor caused me some misgivings ; for I could only too plainly perceive the human weaknesses and the true nature of the man."

Their intercourse was spontaneous and open-hearted—political *arrière-pensées* found no place in it. Humanly speaking, it might be many years before Prince William would take a prominent place in public life. Indeed, it was to be expected that when the Emperor Frederick was in power, the Crown Prince William would be condemned to even greater insignificance than his father had been in the same position. For his relations with both parents were confessedly bad. So that unless it came to an open breach between the Imperial couple and Bismarck, and the son were then called upon by Bismarck to take a leading public part in opposition to his father—an event which was not outside the bounds of possibility—the Prince would for many years be of no political service to even the most calculating of "careerists." Anyone who cleaved to him did so out of genuine sympathy, unaffected by ambitious views.

This is evident in the beginning of the correspondence between Eulenburg and the future Emperor. There is little mention of politics. True, the Prince had to be given an extensive report on the death of the Bavarian monarch ; but for the rest they wrote of literature and music, Nordic balladry and Bavarian art. In August, 1886, Eulenburg wrote to the Prince : " I venture to transmit to your Royal Highness the words of a Nordic ballad which interested your Royal Highness at Prökelwitz.[1] Through Herr von Pfuel " (the Prince's aide-de-camp) " I learn that during the recent illness, which I so deeply regret, Your Royal Highness often spoke of this ballad ; and it is as a small token of my delight and gratitude that I now transmit the poem. . . .

" It gives me very great pleasure that Your Royal Highness should feel at home in this Nordic world with its vigorous sagas. But it does not surprise me, for a spontaneous, energetic character naturally takes to such nourishment, just as it turns from sentimental lachrymose art of every kind, and despises the French ' high-seasoning ' which stage and press so revoltingly force on us.

" The prospect of being allowed to call on Your Royal Highness at Reichenhall fills me with the greatest pleasure."

Similar in tone are the following letters :

" Liebenberg, *Nov.* 20, 1887.

" In these stirring times I send Your Royal Highness a pacific greeting in the shape of the just-published second set of *Skaldengesänge*. The volume contains all those ballads which Your Royal Highness likes, and so the book belongs—

[1] Count Dohna's hunting-box in East Prussia, where the Prince had met Eulenburg.

even without the dedication—quite especially to you. Will Your Royal Highness accept it as the gift of friendship, sent from a full heart? I wish I were able to give ever so much more.

"I shall be happy when the time comes for Your Royal Highness to permit me to sing some of the old songs out of the new book, for I hope that gradually greater tranquillity will be restored in Your Royal Highness's household.

"I am full of anxiety to hear whether the Emperor of Russia's visit will have been of influence on the future course of our policy. My entire family wishes to be graciously remembered by Your Royal Highness, and I remain ever in unchangeable fidelity . . .

"PHILIP EULENBURG."

"Munich, *January* 10, 1888.

"I most respectfully send along with this to Your Royal Highness my *Nordic Battle-Song*, and hope that as military music it may make a good impression. I confess to some fears that the minor passages may prove difficult for a brass band, but even these may be overcome by the skill of the Hussars, aided by the bugles. The march would certainly suit a Janissary band, and Friedrich Wilhelm Voigt" (bandmaster to the First Regiment of Guards) "will be able to adapt it for the Guards.

"I cannot forget Your Royal Highness's kindness on our departure, and the children talk of you as a very specially kind Prince. They think, too, that Prince William looked 'so very handsome' in uniform. To have brought the poor little creatures home without colds in such a temperature is a miracle. My poor wife was horribly upset by the journey.

"I went one evening lately to the great New Year's reception, where the House of Wittelsbach displayed itself in such splendour as gave a good Prussian food for reflection. I could not help thinking of my Emperor that is to be, how he avoids such pretentiousness. I thought of Potsdam, of our sledge-driving, our intimate communion, and a sense of such deep friendship came over me that all of a sudden I felt the glitter around me as an unbearable oppression. How human is our relation—and how I suffer from the thought that the social abyss between us, bridged by our friendship, must inevitably widen more and more when the Imperial Crown is on your head.

"In unchangeable affection and faith . . ."

When affairs of State were touched on, as sometimes happened, the elder man adopted the tone of a kindly instructor :

"Munich, *February* 22, 1887.

"Your Royal Highness's letter arrived on my birthday, so that I could lay it among my most treasured gifts. A thousand thanks for the expression of friendship which it contained, and which makes me glad and proud.

"It is very welcome news to me that the little Prince" (Prince August Wilhelm, born January 29, 1887) "is thriving, and the Princess recovering well. Health and contentment in one's own home are the normal conditions under which alone our work can be done with a free mind and untrammelled energy. May God preserve Your Royal Highness in those conditions, for your own and the country's good !

"Your Royal Highness asked me about the

effect of the Papal Letter on the Bavarian Centre.[1] Unfortunately the good effect will be by no means a lasting one, though for the moment it is of great importance for the Septennat. The watchword in Bavarian Ultramontane circles is: 'Revile the Pope'—which is accordingly done in every tone of voice and with the vulgarest kind of abuse. 'The Septennat is no business of the Pope's; he is getting imbecile,' and so forth. All conversation turns on this. The Liberal Party alone is fully convinced that Windhorst has again played a mean trick, and Franckenstein with him." (They had suppressed the Papal instructions.) "There seems to be little doubt that after the Septennat question is settled, the Centre will again be on the best of terms all round, and I fear that this view is justified. But so long as Windhorst is alive the Centre is not to be depended on, despite all concessions. However, it would be a miracle if a sound, powerful Government like ours should suffer from such a person. What I really mean by this is that our Government is so sound and so powerful that Windhorst and Richter *may* accommodate themselves to it—and there is much comfort in that. We will all work together without fail to keep it as strong as it now is. . . .

"There is a peculiar fatality about the perfidiousness of Austrian policy. If Austria, as its *one* means of political salvation, does not stand firmly and honourably by the alliance with Germany, its collapse is certain. My conviction is that Austria must alternately crumble into separate kingdoms. But we may not and cannot envisage this decay, *until* France is politically

[1] A letter in which the Pope desired that the Centre should vote in favour of the Septennat (the vote of military expenses for seven years).

a dead-letter. How that is to come about is another question. And an open, genuine friendship between Russia and Germany is conceivable only if, by the possession of Constantinople, we impose upon Russia the most arduous of civilising tasks, while *our own back is unburdened.* The great German-Slav war that will one day arrive, let other ages cope with—we prefer not to fight it any further.

"These are a few political figments of the brain into which I have digressed I know not how. They are so exciting that I must turn to the Muse to cool myself down. But even the Muse has a feverish effect, for Mottl is not going to stay in Berlin![1] Hochberg writes that his departure is a settled thing. I suppose he could not put up with his classical rival Deppe, for all conductors like to be master. Hochberg is genuinely anxious to assist in obtaining the proper recognition of Wagner at the Berlin Opera. But it is well that Your Royal Highness should continue to take a prominent part in the good work, so that his efforts may not be in vain. What will be most helpful to the Berlin House with regard to Wagner is undoubtedly the way the Munich one has fallen off. Its prestige has diminished since King Ludwig's death, and the trend is towards Berlin. The Prince Regent never goes to the theatre. And the heir to the throne has not an inkling of art or the drama; all he understands in the way of a spectacle is the October Festival. So the Munich tradition will last but a few years longer—then Berlin will become the centre. Frau Cosima Wagner wants to have

[1] Felix Mottl, the famous Wagnerian conductor, born 1856, died 1911. Just then it was hoped to obtain him for Berlin, where he had been provisionally working for some time.

Levi in Berlin, as I hear confidentially. I should be glad of it, for Levi is a pearl, though an oriental one. His abilities as a conductor are extraordinary, and no stage could fail to prosper under his leadership."

"Munich, *July* 19, 1887.

"I have ventured to send Your Royal Highness a little trifle—an old Tyrolean rustic knife, which bears a motto of such incontestable truth that one might almost dignify it by the name of proverb. Every philosophical system in the world must bow before the principle which a 'simple, pious mind' has dug out for itself by obscure instinct: '*Das Leben ohne Freut ist wohl ein Traurigkeit*' ('A life without some joy is little but annoy'). So the motto runs; and I think Your Royal Highness will be grateful to the sturdy peasant for having clothed a truth so profound in words so striking that one cannot but agree with them heart and soul. I should like at the same time to point out the significant circumstance that the motto is carved upon a *knife*. That means that we must stick anyone who disturbs our 'joy,' and that the sticking is another kind of 'joy' in itself! The latter aspect of this great saying I should like Your Royal Highness to take particularly to heart in political and social matters. But only when the 'annoy' is too considerable—and when the knife is well *sharpened*. . . . I am inexpressibly glad of Your Royal Highness's coming by Munich to the shoot in the Riss. I had supposed that you would go by Castles Schwanstein and Linderhof viâ Parten-Kirchen. That would take, travelling at ease, at least two days, and Your Royal Highness would see in Schwanstein one of the most beauti-

ful castles in the world—very remarkable, too, as contrasted with later buildings in the Romanesque style. . . . I am working hard at the arrangement of my ballads. There are errors to be got rid of before they are fit for print. But one should never do one's work by halves, especially in the ballad-form."

The Prince answered by telegraph on August 1 :

"Thousand thanks for knife and letter ; writing impossible, too busy. Arrive to-morrow at 8 o'clock. Going on with Duke" (Ernest of Saxe-Coburg). "Best wishes.

"WILHELM, P. v. P."

One point in their friendship demands special attention. It has been maintained, and the public has believed it, that Eulenburg was himself a Spiritist, and eventually made the Prince and later the Emperor a "visionary." Towards the end of his official life, the unhealthy influence which he was thus supposed to have exercised upon the eccentrically-inclined monarch was for a time the stalking-horse of his adversaries, and of the Press.[1] The truth is that Eulenburg himself was a convinced *Spiritualist*—that is to say, he was convinced of a transcendental spirit-world. He delighted, too, in meditating upon supernatural visitations, fulfilled prophecies, and the like. He had his definite ideas about such things, and they originated in a sort of romantic mysticism belonging to his poetic nature. But he was very far indeed from wishing to disturb other people's minds with them, and a Spiritist in the vulgar sense he never was. He was a great deal too sensible a man for that,

[1] And this malicious, lying gossip forms part of the international tittle-tattle which is to be found in Count Waldersee's Memoirs. See Vol. II, p. 222.

and, moreover, a convinced Christian. No doubt in the 'eighties, when Spiritism was in fashion, he was addicted to experiments in that sphere; but merely for the purpose of investigating the matter as far as possible. In this sense, as an enquiry into a problem, Spiritism may occasionally have played some part in his intercourse with Prince William. But once the Prince became the Emperor, Eulenburg resolutely abstained from discussing such matters with him. He very well knew why. The following letters are a proof of this:

"Munich, *August* 9, 1887.

"Concerning the, to me, immensely interesting conversation which we had yesterday about 'eternal things,' I should like once more to recommend the *greatest caution* in this matter to Your Royal Highness. To many, indeed to most, of our fellow-countrymen the taste for anything which transcends our temporal limitations is completely alien. Partly from lack of religious feeling, partly from the spirit of opposition, partly from indolence, partly from natural inclination. If, therefore, Your Royal Highness were to express your views in more extended circles, the sympathy of many would be alienated, or at any rate those views would be regarded with a sort of scornful pity. Hostile elements, on the other hand, would trumpet it abroad that you had joined the 'Spiritists.' *That must be avoided at all costs.* If a religious movement were to show a strong tendency in that direction, so much so that officials of State were obliged to adopt a definite attitude, the moment would arrive when Your Royal Highness could and would uphold the cause. The period of petty-minded odium is better allowed to pass."

In a letter to the Imperial Chancellor, Count Bülow, of July 24, 1901, he says :

" . . . A few days ago His Majesty and I had the following conversation :

" *H.M.* I wanted to tell you something which may put you on your guard. From Munich I have had an unsigned letter from a source which is friendly to you, begging me to warn you off Spiritism. It had been observed that you were in relation with a certain Frau Bach, or whatever her name was, who, moreover, hailed from Starnberg ; and the Social Democrats were only waiting their opportunity to make it hot for you about the business. As your friend I think it important that you should know of this.

" *Myself.* For six years—that is to say, as long as I have been in Vienna [1]—I have had nothing to do with such matters either in Munich or Vienna. A certain Frau Bach, who is said to have approached me with Spiritist intentions, is a total stranger to me. Your Majesty will have noticed that since you came to the throne I have never spoken of supernatural matters on a Spiritist basis, and, when asked, have given an evasive answer. I intend to keep a clear conscience, and never to have been instrumental in persuading the Emperor into opinions or experiments which might stamp him as a Spiritist in the eyes of the public. So the warning from Munich is superfluous. My view of these questions has been known to Your Majesty from early days. I have no hesitation in declaring that I have not changed in that respect. My Spiritualist experiences have made my conviction

[1] Eulenburg was then Ambassador in Vienna.

firm as a rock—hence I cannot but be grateful for them. My opinion on the great development of this question goes so far that I feel—it may be in a distant future—that from it will result the refutation and defeat of the materialism under whose tyranny we suffer.

"*H.M.* You may perhaps be right! But Bernard Bülow, too, once said to me that you should be careful. He, too, had heard that the Social Democrats wanted to get at you about it.

"I take it that you, referring to the late newspaper campaign, did once say to the Emperor: 'Philip should be careful, or the Social Democrats may make it hot for him some day. It would be a very good thing if Your Majesty would take an opportunity of speaking to him.' Your warning and the mysterious story are probably connected in this way. Do write me a line about it. The Emperor's attempt to play the anti-Spiritist, so to speak, with me was of course a complete failure. He is much too mystical and superstitious for me to be taken in on that point. But just *because* he has that tendency, I have always most strictly avoided touching on a theme so perilous for a monarch of an imaginative turn of mind. I shall continue in the same course; and for the rest, if I am obliged to do so, will stand quietly by a view to which I owe so much in my inward life."

On February 18, 1902, Eulenburg again touched on the subject with the Chancellor:

"Among the many and various questions of the day, which enliven our dear ruler's existence, I have been interested in those of Christian Science and the Emperor's attitude towards Spiritism. They explain the remarkable con-

versation I had with him in Norway last July, when he spoke of a letter from Munich in which my intercourse with Spiritist circles was said to be common talk. I was able to tell him with a clear conscience that since the 'eighties I have had absolutely nothing to do with such matters in Munich, nor had I *in any way concerned* myself with Spiritism since the period when I was trying to discover something about those things. He himself knew (I said) that I *always* let the subject drop when he touched upon it (which did not prevent him from telling, last summer, a lot of fantastic ghost stories with the most complete conviction, and without permitting the slightest scepticism!). I must confess to you that I do not now believe a single word about the Munich letter. Much more probably he had made up his mind to throw mysticism overboard with a splash, as detrimental to his pose as an 'up-to-date Emperor.' He wanted to find out what my position was, so as to give me a hint—and he did it in the friendliest possible way. So now we may hope that our dear monarch will tell no more ghost stories."

Take them for all in all, there was nothing in his relations with Prince William which could have turned Eulenburg from his purpose of devoting himself entirely to art. The Prince would even perhaps have made the step easier for him, so far as his influence went, for he saw in Eulenburg the future Director of the Court Theatre. Moreover, in 1888 came an offer from Weimar asking him to undertake the directorship of the Court Theatre there. It was declined. The Grand Duchess, in the following year, took Eulenburg reproachfully to task for his refusal.

But just then it happened that the Crown Prince fell mortally ill and swiftly became a hopeless invalid, and that the old Emperor died. Prince William became Crown Prince, soon inevitably to be Emperor. Despite his extreme self-assertion and opinionativeness, the young ruler may very well have had a sense of approaching dangers in which it would be well to have at his side a friend on whom he could unreservedly rely. He begged Eulenburg not to desert him. In such circumstances there could, of course, be no question of resigning from the service. Even if fidelity to his future King had not forbidden that course to a Prussian nobleman, friendship precluded any idea of such a thing.

It was the turning-point in Philip Eulenburg's life. Of his letters to the Prince and youthful Emperor, written at the time when this critical event took place, the following may be given here :

" Munich, *January* 26, 1888.

" To Your Royal Highness I would express my sincerest and most heartfelt wishes. You know from what emotions they spring ! And all that they comprise, in this particular year. I follow Your Royal Highness's movements in the newspapers, and make my own pictures as I read. I guess at many kinds of predicaments, and pin my faith to your temperamental soundness and the energetic will which best keeps men's heads above water. How my heart glowed when I read Your Royal Highness's answer to the clergyman's address, you can easily imagine, as also with what feelings I follow the incessant writhings of Jewish worminess in the Press. Well, the consciousness of *willing* the good is a great thing, and I do not doubt that that which is begun with God will have a worthy issue.

"Your Royal Highness told me of an old Nordic poem in which a last 'arrow' plays a certain part. I have forgotten the story, but out of the ideas it suggested to me I have made something of my own, which may perhaps please Your Royal Highness as a little birthday present. . . . When shall I sing this song? When hear the 'song competition' of the gallant Hussars?"

"Munich, *February* 19, 1888.

"I must tell Your Royal Highness how full my whole heart is of the grief at San Remo, and how my thoughts go towards you and all the flood of emotions which are invading your heart. How cruelly Fate is fulfilling itself, exactly as we foresaw at our last meeting! I pray God from the depths of my heart that he may graciously spare the poor Crown Prince too grievous sufferings. How grateful I am to Your Royal Highness for having thought of me at the close of the operation! That brief message said more than a thousand words.

"I am depressed, too, by Werthern's departure. He was the most kindly of Chiefs to me. His services in Bavaria before the outbreak of war in 1870 can never fail to be recognised. And I torment myself by picturing the glee which certain people in the Foreign Office will feel, people who have long been speculating in the most underhand manner upon this appointment."

"Munich, *March* 11, 1888.

"Out of a full heart I thank Your Imperial Highness for answering my expression of profoundly-felt sympathy on one of the heaviest days of your life. That was a renewed token of the friendship which I treasure.

"I telegraphed to Your Imperial Highness this morning, immediately after the arrival of His Majesty the Emperor Frederick. I did it with tears in my eyes. The sight of that speechless Emperor, from whose face the old cordial kindliness so movingly spoke, and whom I shall probably never see again, was inexpressibly painful to me. What days now await Your Imperial Highness! Not an hour will go by in which my thoughts are not with you. With the homage I offer to my Crown Prince is mingled a feeling as if I could not but give everything I possess to remove this cup from you. God protect and strengthen you!

"P.S. Minister Lutz is going to Berlin for the sittings of the *Bundesrat*. I most earnestly beg Your Imperial Highness to be gracious enough to distinguish this man, in whom the *German* sentiment of Bavaria is incarnate, by conversations and special attentions. At this moment it is *very* important. I shall permit myself, when things are a little quieter, to say a word to Your Imperial Highness on the situation here."

"Munich, *May* 6, 1888.

"I most respectfully enclose for Your Imperial Highness a little *aperçu* of South-German opinion, which I have also incorporated in a letter to Herbert Bismarck. How complex that is, as a result of the Governmental changes and the Battenberg episode, will, I think, be sufficiently evident from my remarks.

"How different were these last two years, at the same season, when we were making music at Prökelwitz! Well, with God's help we shall have other merry meetings in days to come.

"I sent Your Imperial Highness a sketch by Busch, which I bought at the Bazaar in aid of the inundated regions. The legend beneath the picture has in it so much profound knowledge of the world that I have set it before me on my writing-table. The arrogant utterance of the frog is classic, and teaches us very emphatically *not to let our heads swell.* . . .

"How happy it makes me to be able to write to you so openly! To feel that you understand the things I care for! Grave or gay, official, scientific, artistic—each mood so distinct from the other, and each so all-absorbing. So it is with you, and so it shall continue to be with me; and God will give us His blessing into the bargain, if all that we do is penetrated by the sense that only through Him can we attain the highest. . . .

"To one feeling I must give expression—that of the deepest admiration for Her Imperial Majesty the Empress-Mother. How natural it would have been if the old lady had gone to Coblenz or Baden for treatment of her severe illness, and repose. But with a fine sense of duty she stays near her invalid son, and at the same time gives Your Imperial Highness the refuge which the Emperor William's house has represented to you. God will reward the old Empress for it, and she has earned the heartfelt gratitude of all good Prussians.

"And so Your Imperial Highness does not see the Emperor for days at a time? It makes me very sad to think of that."

At first the change of Emperor did not make things any easier at the Munich Embassy. The relations between Munich and Berlin were compromised by the tactlessness with which the new

Imperial couple, on the transit from San Remo to Berlin, had categorically refused to receive any welcome from the Prince Regent of Bavaria. As it was known in Munich how contemptuously the Emperor regarded "the Kings by the Grace of Napoleon," there was much hurt feeling, and it was justified by the fact that the invalid Emperor had formerly received the King of Italy. Then came the great crisis of the projected marriage of Princess Victoria to Prince Alexander of Battenberg. Bismarck threatened to resign. There was widespread irritation at this among the Bavarian people. Of the state of public opinion which then became manifest, a letter from Eulenburg to Herbert Bismarck of April 10, 1888, gives some account :

"I must write you a few words about the effect produced here by the so-called Chancellor crisis. This is particularly noticeable because the compassionate sympathy felt for the Emperor was visibly diminished by the mere supposition that he *could* let your father go. But an aspect which more and more frequently presents itself, and which is pregnant with significance for our relation to Bavaria, is annoyance that the political prestige of United Germany should be in any way endangered on account of a *Prussian* Princess. That is a view which will certainly not be conducive to the unity of Germany. But I also observe with some uneasiness how very much the separate interests of Bavaria are always emphasised, when the talk turns upon the Imperial Chancellor's resignation. That means that there is confidence in *his* tried leadership; but that with a new Chancellor, Bavaria would put its own interests in the foreground."

To a longer communication, in which these relations were exhaustively treated and the antagonism of all factors in Bavaria, with the exception of the Liberals, towards the Prussian Imperial policy was made unmistakably clear, Herbert Bismarck replied on April 30 :

" Your circumstantial private letter of the day before yesterday has interested me extremely. It gives a good picture of the prevalent Munich fancy for Bavarian effervescent beer : A lot of foam, and a lot of eructation, and few are given time to clear their heads, ' for together we swill ' (' *weil's gleich z'sammagsoffa wird* '). Apart from this—like all metaphors—somewhat defective image of the bock-drinkers, I am not so ill-satisfied with the general aspect of affairs in Bavaria. We must leave no stone unturned to keep the Lutz Ministry in office—by tact and circumspection, and if necessary by force as well ; even though it may possess so very little of the above-mentioned attributes, and may also have a touch of the ubiquitous fraud (' *a bisserl Falscheit alleweil dabei* ') about it. With the Clericals there is nothing *but* the fraud, combined with the stupid malice peculiar to intellectual inferiority.

" Our Crown-Prince will easily get on with the Federal Princes—he is clever enough for that. Moreover, he has, together with swift apprehension, so much suppleness of mind and, when he likes, such irresistible charm, that the Confederate Princes will soon see their rock of defence in him. With wider ambitions such as his, he is sure steadily to gain in importance, and the innate dignity with which he behaves will admirably accord with the actual Imperial

position to which he may very well be called in the course of a few weeks.

"Now farewell, old Phili, and treat the *Bawarians* (*Bajowaren*) as you have always done —it is the good old way."

Meanwhile the change in the person of the Ambassador, dreaded for nearly two years, had taken place. So early as 1886 attempts had been made to remove Count Werthern from his post; but at first Eulenburg succeeded in hindering these, by persuading the Prince-Regent himself to beg that Werthern might be left where he was. What then failed of fruition was in February, 1888, achieved by a side-wind. Through an intrigue in which Bismarck family-interests were bound up with the secret desires of certain Bavarian personalities and circles, Prince Bismarck was led, by a curt minute, into so deeply offending the deserving old Count—of whom it was suddenly maintained that he was senile, though his letters plainly proved the contrary—that he sent in his resignation. His place was to fall to the Chancellor's son-in-law, Count Rantzau. Assistants in this job were the Bavarian Ambassador in Berlin, Count Lerchenfeld, and the Under-Secretary of State in the Foreign Office, Count Berchem, who both had personal as well as political motives. By every kind of propaganda they sought to give the impression in Munich that the Chancellor set no value on the Lutz Ministry, but that a Cabinet of Imperialist Catholics was what would suit him. Hence the Bavarian Government saw Werthern's resignation in this light, while the Prince Regent felt himself to be personally affronted, because action had been taken in opposition to his expressed wish. But the Ultramontane opponents of the

Liberal Lutz Ministry were in high feather—its days seemed to be numbered.

In one sense it was naïve in the Minister to wish now to see Eulenburg appointed Ambassador in Werthern's stead, and even to think of taking official steps to that end. This would have been out of order ; a man cannot rise from Secretary to Ambassador in the same place, and Eulenburg had besides been promoted Secretary of Legation only in the New Year of 1888, as his length of service ordained. So that any expression of the Bavarian desire for his nomination would have put him in a very awkward position. He saw that he must decidedly call off his too zealous friends. He told Prince William of this on February 21 :

> " In connection with what I wrote to Your Royal Highness the day before yesterday, I think it well to inform you that the whole town thinks of nothing but getting me as Werthern's successor, and that the Ministers want to start an agitation, even to involve the Prince Regent—whose special favour I in any event am glad to say I enjoy—in order to make the way easy for me. With my best thanks I have *very energetically* made it clear to Minister Crailsheim that I do not desire a word in my favour either from the Court or from the Government ; that my present position *excludes* any such views, and that such an agitation would most seriously injure me. For people would suppose I myself was behind it. I tell this to Your Royal Highness only as a friend, because I know that it will give you pleasure to perceive that I have made a position for myself which enables me to be of use to my beloved King and country—and that is my best reward."

The serious practical danger had always been that the appointment of Rantzau, who, moreover, was personally little fitted for the post, would be regarded in Munich as a sign that Bismarck was seeking a *rapprochment* to the Catholic group, wished to shake off the Liberals in the Empire, and find his support in the Centre Party. That would have deprived Imperial policy in Bavaria of its backbone. For only the Liberals were loyal to the Empire. Their fall would inevitably put the reins in the hands of the anti-Imperialists, Ultramontanes, and Separatists. What that meant for the whole internal policy of the Empire needs no emphasising. Already the Clericals' attack on Lutz had begun. In the summer of 1888 the intrigues of certain persons had brought about a state of affairs on which Eulenburg no longer dared to report officially, for he knew Under-Secretary Berchem to be in the enemy's camp. He wrote to Herbert Bismarck about this: "I tell you *most confidentially*, and only for your personal information, that I did not like to let Berchem see how uneasy Lutz is, and wrote my report with that in view. Berchem is in close contact with the Party which desires a Catholic Imperialist Ministry, that misbegotten pack of rope-dancers who always topple over towards the Romish side. But if that Party were to get even a hint that Lutz is shaking in his shoes about them, there would be the devil to pay."

Eulenburg's opinion of the so-called loyal Catholics was not, as we see, a high one. Moreover, he saw in their ascendancy only a reinforcement to Bavarian Separatism. He summarised his view in the words: "I stick firmly to my opinion that Wittelsbach realms *must* have Liberal advisers."

To avert the threatening danger, it occurred to

Holstein's resourceful brain that they might postpone the appointment of the new Ambassador until the autumn, and meanwhile let Eulenburg conduct affairs. By that time Prince William would be Emperor, and things would take a different turn. The Bavarian Government received an intimation to this effect from Berlin.

But then in the beginning of April came the Chancellor-crisis. Rantzau wished to make sure, in any event, of the desired appointment; and on April 7 Munich suddenly received an enquiry by telegraph whether Rantzau would be acceptable as Ambassador. The Foreign Minister, Baron v. Crailsheim, was almost horror-struck by this. But Court and Ministry found themselves in the awkward position of not being able to tell Prince Bismarck that his son-in-law would *not* be acceptable. So Crailsheim wrote the Prussian *chargé d'affaires* a sardonic note: "The Prince-Regent would gladly see Count Rantzau here as his Ambassador."

Then Prince William intervened. He sent for Herbert Bismarck, and gave him an unmistakable sign of his displeasure. Holstein told Eulenburg of the incident on April 12:

> "The day before yesterday the Crown Prince arranged to see the Secretary of State at 12.15 at the Palace. When Herbert arrived with some papers two minutes after the time—so he told me—His Royal Highness drove past with a nod. He had cancelled the appointment, he was obliged to inspect the Hussars of the Guard at Potsdam; Herbert was to come to the Potsdam railway-station at ten minutes past five. At ten minutes past five Herbert was again at the rendezvous with his papers. His Royal Highness

told him he had no time to read documents, but had merely wished to speak to him about you. He wished that your interregnum should last some time longer. Herbert said that that had already been arranged for. The Prince then said that he particularly wished you to remain in Munich as Ambassador-designate. Rantzau could then easily be given another post. Herbert told me this without any comment. I believe he has said nothing as yet to his father or to Rantzau. The foregoing for your strictly confidential and private information. Cordial greetings.

" HOLSTEIN.

" Of course you will let no one on either side know that you are informed."

Thus Eulenburg, against the wishes of the Bismarck family, became *chargé d'affaires* at Munich for an indefinite period, with the prospect of becoming Ambassador. The Crown Prince himself informed him of the arrangement. He answered on April 14 :

" I received Your Imperial Highness's letter yesterday. With what feelings Your Imperial Highness can imagine. After I had completely reconciled myself to Rantzau's appointment, and was only pondering a little on how I might best manage to smoothe down the rather unpleasant situation here in the Prussian interest, *this* letter arrives ! It is not in my nature to desire anything for myself *personally*—Your Imperial Highness knows that ! And so Your Imperial Highness's intention was the most unqualified surprise to me. It is true that my length of service as a diplomat does not as yet entitle me to ' climb,' as Herbert convincingly says. But my length of

years does (and I have not come any croppers, either). Having been in former days an active officer and lawyer, I feel that such experiences, which not every diplomatist possesses, may be reckoned towards my official career.

"My position here will not be an easy one now. That is certain, and many bitter pills will be mingled with my daily bread. But all that will trouble me mighty little."

It was fortunate that Herbert Bismarck, who probably acquiesced in what he was unable to prevent, did not take the turn of affairs in bad part, or at any rate did not revenge it on his friend, who was able to tell the Crown Prince on May 6: "I have had my first letter from Herbert since a certain interview Your Imperial Highness had with him. I rejoice to say that he addresses me with unaltered friendliness and understanding, and that this incident has not cast any cloud upon our intercourse." He was referring to a letter of April 30, which contained this fine tribute: "We are such old friends, and know each other's loyalty so well, that you are one of the mighty few people whose bare word I would take for anything."

Eulenburg answered on May 20:

"Your letter of April 30 was a very great joy to me. For what better thing can there be than to have such assurances of true friendship from him to whom one is whole-heartedly devoted?

"Your view of our Crown Prince has extraordinarily interested me. I am glad to see that your old admiration for him is in no way diminished. And I observe with much interest the intellectual development of the Prince, which his letters to me convincingly prove. I feel sure I have to thank you for the bestowal of the order

through our poor Emperor. And I do thank you most warmly. But I am especially glad of your moving words of recognition on the value of my official services. Some years ago I felt a sort of mental slackness—as a bird may have the pip ; but that is completely overcome, and I know that we, who peculiarly belong to you and your father, have our own peculiar duties. So you will always be able to reckon safely on me in future."

If, nevertheless, a cloud *had* fallen on their relationship, it was dispersed when the Emperor William, on October 1, paid his first visit to Munich, accompanied by Herbert Bismarck. Eulenburg's diary has the following entries :

"Munich, *October* 1, 1888.

"At 9 o.c. arrived the Imperial train. After he had greeted the Prince, and the Guard of Honour had marched past, the Emperor shook hands with me and said : 'I must see you again this evening.' Then I drove with Augusta, to whom the Emperor had also been most gracious, behind the Royal carriage to the Residency. There the Princesses were received. By 11.30 the Emperor had gone to his room. I went down and was alone with him till one o'clock. Unchangingly the same friend, full of fellow-feeling for me and mine.

"Our conversation turned on the Diaries.[1] He is profoundly angered, and speaks of his mother as the source of publication. 'A woman's revenge,' he said to me. Not a word about their being a forgery, which indeed is out

[1] The publication of the Crown Prince Frederick's Diaries of the Franco-Prussian War, which had taken place in September, was then a subject of universal interest.

of the question" (Bismarck, in a "rush article" had had the book pronounced a forgery). "It is a proof of unparalleled courage, but also of conscious power, that anyone should permit himself, on political grounds, to represent the authentic Diary of the unfortunate Emperor Frederick as a forgery. It is likewise a proof of that faculty of the great Chancellor's which my witty old friend, Count Werthern, called 'keeping a lie within hair's-breadth distance of the truth,' thus to lend a certain stamp of credibility to the assertion of its being a forgery.

"*October* 2.

"At half-past nine I breakfasted with Augusta at a café in the Hofgarten, then paid a visit to Court-Marshal von Liebenau, and there was told that the Emperor had sent for me. When Lucanus had finished his report I was admitted to the Emperor, who appeared in five minutes in the parade-uniform of his Bavarian Uhlan regiment. He gave me the Hohenzollern Order with a few gracious words—a great surprise, for I had been told that the members of the Embassy were not to be decorated. We had a short conversation; then the Emperor had to go to the Queen-Mother and begin his round of visits.

"I went home with Herbert Bismarck, as the Emperor wished him to have a talk with me about my official position. The rather ticklish interview ended in mutual satisfaction, and our old friendship suffered no abatement. . . .

"The dinner was extremely brilliant, and the drinking of the Emperor's health so moving that the old Bavarian Generals beside whom I sat had tears running down their cheeks. After

the dinner a big reception. The Emperor talked with me again, and invited himself to the shoot at Liebenberg. Augusta, with whom he had a long talk, he invited with the children to Potsdam. . . . Then we drove to the railway-station. The Emperor dismissed the Guard of Honour, got into his coupé, and remained standing at the window. There he called me to him last of all, and I talked with him a long time, standing on the step of the carriage. This striking mark of his friendship attracted great attention (and corresponding displeasure). He evidently *intended* to distinguish me above all others."

The result of the Munich discussions was manifested at the beginning of November : Eulenburg was appointed Ambassador at Oldenburg. On the 24th of that month he presented his credentials there ; on the 14th of December ensued the departure from Munich. "Many people said an affecting farewell to us at the station," records the Diary. In December the new house was got ready, while the family stayed with the Eulenburg parents at Liebenberg. A very happy mood is evident in the entry : "A splendid Christmas ! Full of gratitude to God for the cheerful festival, celebrated in common."

With the move to Oldenburg began a new era. A new sphere of activity, new and more important duties, independent responsibility ; but beyond all this was something else which henceforth was to fill the days increasingly, and finally to consume his energies—a peculiar, a uniquely confidential position at his sovereign's side.

MINISTER AT GERMAN COURTS

I

OLDENBURG, 1888–1890

FROM Munich to Oldenburg—it was certainly no small come-down from the metropolitan capital of the second largest State in the Federation, the headquarters of German artistic life, to the residency of the little Grand Duchy, the quiet country-town, where all life was concentrated in the Court and the Government. But Eulenburg, with his faculty for adapting himself to everything, soon found out the many good sides of his environment, and his own inward riches made him feel easily at home in it. Nothing was further from his thoughts than to look down on this little world. If in his earlier letters he gave free play to his spirit of derision on that topic, he soon learnt to think differently. Of the Minister Jansen and his wife, who at first did not seem quite to accord with his preconception of a Ministerial couple, he even made personal friends as he came to know them better ; and for many things which were otherwise lacking he found compensation in the repose of family life, which always represented to him the greatest earthly happiness. His only regret was that this enjoyment was too often broken into by the demands of his calling.

At the Oldenburg Court he was received with open arms. There was an old friendship with the heir to the Grand Duchy, dating from their student days in Leipzig. And there were no official difficulties in Oldenburg itself. But to his sphere of activity belonged also Brunswick, Detmold, and

Bückeburg ; and in those days that meant much. In Detmold there was already a gathering cloud—the question of the succession, in later years to become a burning one ; and in Bückeburg Prince Adolf was to be brought forward as a candidate for the hand of Princess Victoria, in order to prevent a recrudescence of the Battenberg marriage project. Eulenburg was still concerned with the latter affair even after he had left Oldenburg, and he succeeded in arranging the desired marriage—though it is true that the Emperor's brother-in-law did not obtain the expected succession to the Principality of Detmold.

Brunswick presented more serious difficulties. There very complicated circumstances prevailed. The Regent, Prince Albert of Prussia, was exceedingly ill-pleased with his position, and as he was besides in bad health—having brought on nicotine poisoning by excessive indulgence in snuff—he made no secret of his intention to withdraw from it. For the Guelph pretensions in Brunswick itself and the neighbouring Hanover, this would have been a dangerous encouragement, particularly if it were known that the Regent regarded himself as an unauthorised intruder, and was only too willing to recognise the Cumberland claims. Round this point, as is always the way, gossip and intrigues of every sort had been rife ; and the position was already very ticklish when Eulenburg on February 1, 1889, handed the Regent his credentials. Fortunately he at once gained the Prince's confidence, and was initiated into his views. How he succeeded in averting the danger by resolute and courageous action in the critical moment he has himself arrestingly narrated in his Memoirs. But it required much further persuasion to keep the profoundly discontented ruler, who

regarded the Regency as a mere temporary makeshift, at the helm.

These were storms in a teacup, but when the teacup ran over it made a mess. The Prussian Ambassador in Oldenburg had therefore to keep a watchful eye on Brunswick, so that there no mischief might occur. Add to this the necessity of visiting the two Lippe Courts from time to time—and it will be seen that the Oldenburg post was not so very simple a matter, and brought in its train many public and private inconveniences.

After a year's work there Eulenburg summarised his impressions in a letter to Bülow :

> " You ask after me and mine. We are all well, and should more fully enjoy the pleasant independence and the peace of domesticity if I had not to travel incessantly between my ridiculous four Courts and Berlin, like a bagman. ' My time of unrest '—I will bear it ; and the haven of Oldenburg, despised and contemned by thousands, seems a fair one to me when I land there."

A peaceful haven of repose was indeed necessary to Eulenburg, now that to the ordinary and extraordinary duties of the regular service was added his very unusual kind of friendship with the Emperor. This relation, originally of a purely human nature, had by this time turned into official service, and gradually acquired more and more of that colour.

On March 5, 1889, Eulenburg's father died. The work and responsibility connected with the management of the great Liebenberg estate now fell upon the son—a task extensive enough to fill a man's life. " I ventured," so he writes, " to say to the Emperor that I was indispensable at home. But he answered that his best friend would never

leave him in the lurch with the burden of responsibility which had only so recently fallen on his shoulders." Against that there was no arguing. The friend and Emperor exacted the sacrifice of liberty. It was quietly offered up as fulfilment of a duty which was a matter of course.

And in another quarter Eulenburg's leaving of the service would have been unfavourably regarded. We know how at Friedrichsruh this friendship was valued, and how it was sought to be utilised while William II was still only Prince William. Since the Prince had become the Emperor, the Emperor's friend, too, had become an important piece in the game played by the Imperial Chancellor and his son. So early as December, 1887, Eulenberg had recorded after his interview with Herbert Bismarck : " They want to use me for a certain kind of influence on him—the Prince." With perfect frankness he had revealed to Herbert Bismarck the extent of his intimacy with the future Sovereign, and placed his services at his disposal. On April 10 he wrote to him :

> " I do not know whether you are aware that the Crown Prince corresponds with me? I am sometimes uneasy at having to give him an answer to political questions, knowing pretty well that that is not in general desired. You know my sentiments, my loyal attachment to the Prince and yourself. So as far as I myself am concerned, I see no ' danger.' "

There seems to have been no answer to this, which was equivalent to a sanction. Indeed, what could have better pleased the Chancellor than the Emperor's confidential relation with a man who was his son's intimate friend ? Bismarck must then have thrown out a suggestion that this relation

should take something like an official form, thus making it continuously useful to the Government. Simultaneously with his appointment as Ambassador, it was decided to "employ Eulenburg for work in the Foreign Office." He was to be kept *au courant* with all important proceedings, and allowed access to documents. So he was, as it were, an extra-representative of the Foreign Office, attached to the Imperial person !

In the Bismarck family the services which Eulenburg could now render were highly prized, and he was trusted. On November 21, 1888, he could write in his diary of a breakfast at Herbert Bismarck's : "Finally I was left alone with Herbert, and we had an interesting political talk. His confidence in me seems greater than ever, which much rejoices me." When in the summer of 1889 there was discussion as to the Emperor's suite on the first of the afterwards perpetually repeated Norwegian cruises, and Eulenburg was doubtful whether he ought to go, Herbert Bismarck wrote to him (May 15) :

> "Concerning His Majesty's Norwegian cruise, I shall be very glad if you will accompany him ; and cannot quite see what reason there is for your hesitation. Your influence on H.M. is an excellent one, and to me, practically speaking, very welcome besides. You can do a lot of good during the weeks of idleness on board, and I feel it a comfort that you are going. . . . Anyhow I want to have a confidential talk with you before you start, and will accordingly beg you to come over for a day some time in June."

This first Norwegian cruise turned out a martyrdom for Eulenburg, though to him and Count Waldersee the best cabins on board were assigned.

Sea trips gave him, who was a bad sailor, in general but little enjoyment and were often a torture. This first time he was ill before he went on board on June 30. His trouble was diagnosed before long as an acute attack of shingles. After a week of misery he was obliged to leave the yacht at Bergen on July 9, and it was only on the 14th, barely convalescent, that he was able to rejoin the party at Drontheim. The whole time he was longing for home; and when on the return journey they passed Wangeroog, where his family was staying, and his children, waving flags, saluted the Emperor (who recognised them) from the shore, Eulenburg recorded sadly: "It was very touching to see the little ones, and hard to have to wait several days before one could clasp them in one's arms." The unenjoyable trip had so affected him that he lost his voice in a species of nervous paroxysm, and regained it only gradually after several weeks of treatment at Gastein and a long period of further leave at Liebenburg.

His relation to the Emperor had in the meantime grown still more affectionate. On the accession he had written to the young Sovereign:

"Munich, *June* 15, 1888.

"Your Majesty has hitherto most graciously permitted me intercourse with you by letter. Whether I may now continue it, I do not know. But to-day I once more make use of the old custom to offer my homage to my new Emperor, and give expression to my most heartfelt sympathy for the sad loss which Your Majesty has suffered. My Prussian heart, despite all its pain, beats joyously for the Sovereign, but my friendship's heart is filled with melancholy at the thought of the deep chasm which nevertheless separates the

Sovereign from the subject. But no subject can honour his Sovereign more than I do, who have been allowed to look into the heart of the noblest of *friends*. I pray from the depths of my soul that Your Majesty will deign to preserve me the favour which has become a radiance in my life. But unchangeably till death I am Your Majesty's most faithful servant and subject."

The answer is lost, but the facts take its place for us. As in the first months, during his visit to Munich, William II loved to distinguish his friend before all the world. To his tutor, Hinzpeter, he introduced him at a Court shoot in Bückeburg on January 17, 1889, with the words : " My bosom friend, Philip Eulenburg, the only one I have." Eulenburg himself comments on this : " Such speeches delight me and make me happy—but, repeated, they will arouse much envy." Their intercourse became still closer in the course of the year 1889, when Eulenburg, besides accompanying the Emperor on the Norwegian cruise, was called upon as Ambassador to be with him on his accession-visits to the North German Courts, and was also selected to represent the Foreign Office at the yearly shooting visit to Count Dohna in Prökelwitz. The records of 1889 contain a description of these Prökelwitz sojourns, which gives a pleasant picture of the life and personal intercourse with the Sovereign on such occasions :

" *June* 4, 1889.

" Life at Prökelwitz is extremely easy-going and restful. One gets up about six o'clock, to assemble for breakfast in the forest with the Emperor. Potatoes are roasted at a big fire, stuck on wooden spikes, and handed round by the guests' keepers. There is bread and butter,

too, and various wines. The Emperor drives out there while it is still night—about two o'clock—and has a beefsteak beforehand. We lie about on the grass while breakfasting, talk about the incidents of the chase, and tell stories. The Emperor, in the highest of spirits, laughs and chaffs us all, and it is hard to remember the Imperial purple in such light-hearted moments.

"After breakfast we start for home, unless there is some special sporting activity on hand, such as the beating of a covert or the like, in which we take part. At about eleven we are back in Prökelwitz, where in the plain, whitewashed dining-room with its hundreds of antlers on the wall, and its open doorways, a hot breakfast awaits us. After this the Emperor goes to his room to sleep till about three o'clock. Some of the others follow his example; or we read, write, or work (like myself, who am obliged to go through the Imperial correspondence and my official papers) or take a walk or otherwise amuse ourselves.

"Between three and four the Emperor attends to the private letters of State which have arrived for me from Berlin. I am always with him at this time, laying the papers and discussing official matters. Dinner takes place at four. We appear in morning-dress, and no luxury of any kind is displayed. The food is excellent and the wines good, but everything is plainly served. It would be difficult to imagine a simpler, more unconstrained mode of life. After dinner we have coffee in the garden, and it amuses the Emperor to look for thunderbolts, of which many are to be found among the gravel (most of which have been scattered there beforehand by

Eberhard).[1] About six o'clock the Emperor drives out again to the chase, and those who stay behind go for a walk, until about half-past nine the Emperor's return is announced. A signal sounds when the carriage is seen approaching the village, two great torch-lights are lit in front of the house under the old linden trees, the keepers assemble, and we form a group at the door when the wagon drives in. Then the bucks are taken out, the bag is counted, and the retinue sound the horns: '*Bock tot*' ('Buck dead').

"It is usually ten o'clock before we gather in the sitting-room where supper is laid—bread and butter, strawberries, and cup. The Emperor takes his usual chair, I sit beside him, and after some amusing talk I am called upon to sing ballads, or else the Emperor reads aloud the newspaper-cuttings that have come to him, adding his comments and discussing the given subject. A little after eleven the Emperor withdraws, and I too seek my couch in my room on the first floor, where I am housed with Richard and Eberhard Dohna. Thus it goes on, day after day; and I find this unusual rest as really beneficial as my Sovereign does—unless a shower-bath of political news descends upon me and keeps me chained to my writing-table till far into the night."

On November 25 and 26 Eulenburg was to receive the Emperor on a shooting-visit in his own house. It was the first of these occasions, which thenceforth were repeated almost yearly at the same season, usually in the early days of November. What has not been whispered, insinuated, in-

[1] The host, Count Dohna.

vented about these "Imperial shoots at Liebenberg"—until the newspaper-reading public has had it well hammered into their heads that there, in that castle in the Utermark, was the place where to the sound of hunting-horns and clinking glasses the most sinister intrigues were hatched, and Germany's destruction prepared by the deadly hands of an evil-minded sorcerer! If any of the all too-numerous persons who believe in this fantastic picture as they do in the multiplication-table had but beheld one of the days of such a visit with his own eyes, he would have felt his countenance changing. Nowhere was there less talk of politics—indeed, they were definitely a forbidden subject, except during the brief moments when the host had to report progress, and in obedience to instructions from the Foreign Office talk confidentially with the Emperor over pressing affairs. All the rest of the time belonged to the pleasures of sport and a gay, unaffected, often boisterous, good-fellowship such as the Emperor delighted in. It was for that very reason that he came to his friend in the country—to refresh himself, relax, be a man among men. He would have taken it in very bad part if there had been any attempt to spoil his pleasure by talking of affairs of State. And for furtive indirect influence upon the Sovereign no occasion could be more unfavourable than a visit at which a numerous house-party, consisting of the Emperor's suite and some guests invited by his command, would have been witnesses of every word from morning till night.

What an exertion such a visit meant for the host can be gathered from a reminiscence written by Eulenburg of an Imperial shooting-party lasting from October 29 to 31, 1891. It had been a special success. The climax of merriment had been

reached when Herr von Hülsen, later *General-Intendant*, had recited Schiller's *Glove* with comic pantomime, in which Count Görz played the lion, and Kiderlen the knight Delorges. The company was numerous—to the thirteen members of the house-party and the twenty-three composing their retinue were added seventeen guests, with nineteen officials and servants ; seventy-two altogether—and the trouble that had to be taken was commensurate.

Eulenburg wrote of this :

> " As a reminiscence I may give here a short survey of the expenditure which an Imperial visit with shooting entails upon the master of a country-house—expenditure in men and materials commensurate with the honour represented by the stay of a *German Emperor* in a private house. An honour which on the one hand must be responded to in such a way that the inhabitants of the castle and the neighbourhood will recognise it as being one ; and on the other, so that the Emperor will feel it to be nothing but a pleasure, and in no way an effort and a weariness.
>
> " The responsible leader in the carrying out of such arrangements is the host alone, and so the concentration of ideas is for him a heavier burden than the mastering of a difficult diplomatic problem will often present. For to deliver the Emperor's person safe and sound out of the castle and the game-preserves, out of the drives, meals, and festive drinking-nights—safe and sound, unvexed, unruffled, without any sort of disturbing incident . . . this means a very great deal of vigilance, a sense of everlasting responsibility which only he can estimate who has called the Emperor his guest throughout several days and nights.

"To such a task was added my position, obliged as I was to keep the Emperor informed of official political papers, so that in that respect also I was burdened with the heaviest kind of responsibility. For woe to me if under my roof, during the Emperor's visit, political events should occur which were bound to awaken public attention! I should inevitably have to bear all the blame.[1] And almost heavier was the burden when any serious and acute questions of policy had to be discussed between me and the Emperor, questions which from their confidential nature added a moral extra to the rest of the responsibility that as host and supervisor of all arrangements I had to bear. Finally there was yet another thing which claimed my utmost energies. As son of the house and representative of my mother I had always to sit opposite the Emperor at méal-times, and it fell to my share to lead the conversation and keep it going in such a way that the meal should be spiced with merriment without becoming noisy—a task which doubtless my temperament made easy enough, but which nevertheless demanded a good deal of thought, since it was always to some extent affected by the company assembled. For the attention of everyone was even at meal-times concentrated on the Emperor and the conversation which was going on with him. And there is still something to mention. To lead the conversation at table was not enough—I had to do the same in the later evening-hour, often till midnight, in the big library where the piano, too, stood. There I had to sit, accompanying myself, and sing my Nordic ballads.

[1] So it did happen, three years later, when Caprivi resigned—with as little justification as the reader will gather in the pages to come.

"How weary I was when I sank into my bed, after escorting the Emperor to his room! And early in the morning, while everyone else was fast asleep, would appear my faithful head-keeper, Perlet, to make arrangements for the shoot, to which after breakfast we would go off with great pomp."

For the unconstrained and independent, at once frank and respectful, tone which Eulenburg took in his intercourse with his Imperial master, this letter in which he invited him in November, 1889, to the shoot at Liebenberg will serve as an example:

"Oldenburg, *November* 17, 1889.

"Your Majesty was so very gracious as to express a wish to shoot at Liebenberg after your return from the East. So I now present myself with the most respectful inquiry as to when Your Majesty would desire the little party to be arranged? Experience has shown that a November without snow would be the most propitious moment, and I have already expressed myself in that sense to Your Majesty. My extremely respectful request that Your Majesty might this year, in consequence of my father's death, desire a *small* party I have also laid before Your Majesty. I would therefore very humbly make the following suggestion: that Your Majesty should come with only one aide-de-camp (perhaps Kessel)—our Northern friends, Lyncker and Leuthold, could be held at disposition, in case of need.

"The ladies of the house are not at Liebenberg. As guests and guns, of which a certain number will be necessary, I give Your Majesty some names, with a most respectful request that Your Majesty will put a cross against those which are

not to your liking. *That cross will of course be locked in the most secret recesses of my guileless heart.*

"I thought of music in the evenings from Chelius, Moltke, and Hochberg, and a conjuring performance from Hülsen. And I hope to sing some of my loveliest songs besides. I should be very grateful if I could hear your most gracious decision in time to get to Liebenberg a few days before the shoot. What a delight to see Your Majesty again!

List of Guests.

"Count Hochberg: sings. Lieutenant v. Chelius: plays. Captain Count Moltke: plays. Lieutenant v. Hülsen: does conjuring tricks. Varnbüler: draws caricatures. Count Herbert Bismarck: drinks. Count Richard Dohna: cobbles shoes.[1] Count Eberhard Dohna: eats. Brother-in-law Count Kalnein: makes bad puns. Count Heini Dankelmann: shoots swallows with a bullet. My brother, Cousin Kessel, Keszcki, Cousin Karl Eulenburg, Cousin Walter Esebeck: can do nothing whatever."

The legend that it was Eulenburg above all others who spoiled and ruined the Emperor by flatteries passes to-day for an historical fact. We shall frequently have an opportunity to prove the contrary. Here it is enough to say that in the beginning of William II's reign those who were initiate judged quite otherwise. Rudolf Lindau, chief of the Press Department at the Foreign Office, wrote to Eulenburg on February 6, 1890, after an interview with the Emperor: "I think it fortunate that a man with your qualities of heart should

[1] Because of his servile nature, Count Dohna was called, in intimate circles, "the Cobbler."

stand high in his esteem and enjoy his confidence." Bernard Bülow said very much the same on March 2 :

> " I regard it as a particularly fortunate dispensation that you stand at the Emperor's side as his loyal squire. In my estimation, no one can understand and interpret many, and those perhaps precisely the sincerest and finest, aspects of our Sovereign, as you can. There are few things I more earnestly desire than that this conviction, and the consciousness of the good you can do, may bear you still farther on ' eagle pinions ' above the chasms and peaks of the diurnal chaos."

It was known that Eulenburg did not mince his words with the Emperor. Thus Holstein wrote to him in December, 1889, that Ambassador von Marschall, later Secretary of State, had told the Grand-Duke of Baden that in Eulenburg's opinion one could say anything to the Emperor. An example of this is the following passage from a letter to the Emperor of September 24, 1889, in which the delicate subject of the Sovereign's restlessness and passion for travelling is very frankly touched upon.

> " Your Majesty can scarcely form any conception of the frightful state of nervous exhaustion which overwork and want of rest has produced in me. The crisis was brought on by that girdle of roses which so unluckily blossomed among the splendid fjords. I beseech Your Majesty to consider this, and not to work beyond all reason, and live so restless a life. My nerves *were* once what Your Majesty's are now ; and though I, by gracious permission, can set myself right by living

as a mere private person, Your Majesty will *never* be able to give yourself such plenary indulgence. Therefore prohibitive measures are the only right ones—I mean that *the pace of your life must be reduced as far as is possible.* Your Majesty will, I am sure, most graciously forgive me this digression. It is founded on experience, and comes from the depths of my heart."

The position as friend of the Emperor and confidant of the House of Bismarck which Eulenburg had filled since 1888 was destroyed by the great event which in March, 1890, convulsed Germany and the whole world—the retirement, or rather the fall, of Bismarck. How it affected Eulenburg, how he had earlier than most people seen it coming, sought in vain to avert it, then at least to delay it and give it a milder form, cannot be told here. The essentials can be read in his Memoirs. The copious notes and letters he left behind him, unrolling the picture of those stirring weeks and months as in a cinematographic film, must await a special revelation. True to his principles of moderation, mediation, and reconcilement, Eulenburg stood in this instance also between the contending parties, honoured by the Emperor with his fullest confidence, more and more neglected by the Bismarcks. Inevitably one asks one's-self why they did not make more use of this confidential agent, why they did not pay more heed to his counsel. Had their distrust been awakened by perfidious go-betweens? The old Prince, when the bomb exploded, boldly declared that Eulenburg had never been anything but his enemy since his conflict with the Minister, Count Botho Eulenburg, to whom he had in open session at the House of Lords so ruthlessly given the lie that the Minister was forced to

BISMARCK IN 1890

retire. This suspicion was very likely the outcome of a bad conscience. It was entirely baseless, and Bismarck himself had shortly before had reason to know better. No one more clearly foresaw what a breach between Emperor and Chancellor would mean than Philip Eulenburg. He had given the Emperor a very explicit warning so early as the summer of 1889, when the first threatening cloud appeared on the horizon, and again in January, 1890, when things were beginning to culminate. "If you break with Bismarck, the effect will be the same as if you trained a gun upon the people. If Your Majesty takes too decided a line, he will go, and that would be a national disaster—a disaster for Your Majesty."

Nevertheless it came to that. All efforts had been fruitless. An entry in Eulenburg's diary for July 13, 1899, on the Norwegian cruise, gives an account of the impressions then acquired :

> "During a quiet drive with the Emperor . . . all sorts of memories cropped up. The things we have gone through together, suffered together—there are so many of every sort !—were gone over again, and the Emperor spoke of the strenuous period of Bismarck's dismissal. I told him that I should always remember that inexpressibly painful time, if only because it had cost me the best part of my nervous system. My efforts to preserve a good understanding between the Palace and the Wilhelmstrasse had, I said, been justly recognised by Bismarck, but I had got no thanks in the end. 'On thanks from that man you could never reckon, although the Prince often told me how much he liked you,' said the Emperor. 'On mine you could, and mine only ! I shall be grateful to you all my

life for what you were to me in those difficult days.' "

Eulenburg never attempted to conceal that during the crisis, as also later in the conflict between Bismarck and the Emperor, his sympathies had been on the Emperor's side, and that he had acted on that feeling. He saw it as the duty of a friend and official of State. In order to avert disaster from his friend and the State, he had tried to compose the differences, and that had been his view of the best solution in the subsequent period. This does not seem easily comprehensible to us who know the end of Emperor William II's reign. For at that time the question actually was whether William II was to be allowed to reign, or was to content himself with the appearance of reigning, like his grandfather before him. The question was decided in the Emperor's favour; his personal government began with Bismarck's dismissal, and it led—we know where. Would it not have been the duty of anyone with insight to prevent that, to resist the first beginnings of it? And does not a cloud hang over all who did not then wholeheartedly support Bismarck?

Reading history backwards, we should so judge. But that is not the way to see men and things aright. For the books of Clio are not written in Hebrew—they are not meant to be read the wrong way round. Anyone who wants to comprehend the procedure of the men of 1890 should forbear from considering them in the light of later events, should not assume as known and established what had not then come to pass, and need not ever have come to pass. How William II would govern with no Bismarck behind him—who could in 1890 attempt to prophesy that? Who knew the young Emperor

well enough—who could say how he would develop? His reign was inaugurated amidst the highest expectations, the most confident hopes, and especially from Bismarck and his son. Even in the days of the conflict the Emperor gave an early proof of his ability—he astonished the world by his masterly leadership of the Council of State. "Dazzling"—that was the impression given at home and abroad by his personality; a really great ruler seemed to have emerged in him. And the impression lasted a good while. How enthusiastic, for example, was Bernard Bülow's verdict!

In August he wrote to Eulenburg: "We cannot be sufficiently thankful that we have a monarch who always reminds me of the heroic Salier and Hohenstaufen Emperors of our mediæval period. He is . . . a chip from the block out of which our Lord loves to fashion the really great rulers." And again in December: "The Emperor's personality grows indubitably more arresting every day—he is absolutely up to the mark. If he finds faithful and wise servants, he will one day occupy a big place in world-history. The material is evidently there." If on one at a distance he could so impress himself, can we blame his intimate friend if he too saw predominantly the good, the brilliant side of his young Sovereign, which, moreover, was most apparent in personal intercourse; and if concerning other things, to which he could not be blind, he took refuge in the very natural idea that years and experience of life would develop still further the admirable qualities, and transmute the effervescence which at times had so absurd an effect, into noble wine? Even Holstein himself, at a tranquil moment in September, 1891, remarked: "The Emperor, when rightly advised,

is a big item in our political inventory—we must not forget that."

That item would, however, have been cancelled if the Emperor, once open conflict had been declared, had submitted to Bismarck. "In Prussia the King reigns." So Bismarck himself had taught. In the King's name he had done his great deeds. To have established the reigning dynasty firmly in the saddle, when it had lost its stirrup, rightly ranks as his greatest service. Now that was all to be undone; the King was to bow to his principal servant, who had not even the majority of the nation permanently behind him! On whom the rule of an all-powerful Imperial Chancellor could rest, if the Sovereign were to be forced to abnegate his own will, it would be hard to say.

And what would have been the permanent advantage? Bismarck was a veteran of seventy-four, his life might come to an end any day, in no event could it last long. Where among all living men was the one who could carry on his tradition? Was it his son? Those who knew him never thought so; he had too great a knack of making enemies, and that does not mean a long period of power. In view of such an utterly uncertain future, would it have been right to dim the lustre of the crown, the prestige of the monarchy?

And add to this that in the decisive moment, according to the judgment of the initiated, and indeed of all, the Emperor appeared to be practically in the right, and Bismarck in the wrong.[1]

[1] So it was thought, especially among the Confederate Princes. Indicative of this is the remark made by the very shrewd old Prince of Lippe-Schaumburg to Eulenburg in the beginning of May, 1890: "That the Emperor has had the pluck to let Prince Bismarck go makes him go up three points in my estimation. He would have gone down three if he had borne to go on being Groom of the Chambers." No conclusive verdict, it is true, but a sign of how a shrewd Prince could at that time judge him; and many others did the same.

The way he treated the young monarch, the way he let the conflict explode while it was still possible to avert it; the vacillation, the perpetual change of ground in the battle for power, the means adopted to wrest the victory—all this could not strengthen confidence in him. Of the art of handling men, in which he had been past master, there was not a vestige here.

It will be said: "Even so—Bismarck was Bismarck; and, trusting to his proved statesmanship, they ought to have suffered him gladly so long as they still had the luck to possess him." That is easily said, and to later observers such a *sacrificium intellectus* costs but little. But for contemporaries, especially those elected for co-operation and responsibility, it was hard to take the position: "Everything he does is well done!" The sense that even *that* genius was not utterly infallible was stronger in them than in posterity, who nevertheless should not quite forget such grievous errors as the *Kulturkampf* and the Berlin Congress. Especially in the months that preceded the storm did doubts whether the great Chancellor was really what he had been increase in those circles which had actual insight into the course of affairs. That even he was beginning to pay the tax of length of years was no longer to be denied. Once he had dominated everyone around him and thought nothing of it; but now it was otherwise. Inferior minds—a Rottenburg, a Rantzau—could influence him, to say nothing at all about the constant and very important influence of his son Herbert. The name of Bismarck was no longer an unencumbered estate; it was burdened with the mortgages of those who surrounded him in his rustic isolation. Did not his own son William say at last: "My father has lost his old hammer-stroke!" How

right he was, anyone can see who reads, for instance, the Memoirs of the Minister Lucius. This old and devoted admirer records, with an ever more melancholy shake of the head, the last actions of his hero. Truly it was thus, and not otherwise. Bismarck had grown old. Were they still bound to obey him blindly, to the abandonment of any personal opinion, and with the prospect that he might die from one day to another and perhaps leave to his successor such complications as he would not himself have been able to unravel ?

The precariousness, especially, of the internal policy which Bismarck had begun to develop, Philip Eulenburg had perceived more clearly than anyone else. While he was still in Munich he had commented on the trend towards the Centre Party which Bismarck at first tentatively and cautiously, but in course of time more and more boldly, had manifested. Since Count Rantzau had been officiating as Ambassador, this had become still more explicit. The preparations for a new system of internal policy were unmistakable. The vehemence with which Bismarck suddenly attacked the National Liberals plainly pointed to his wishing to abandon the existing policy of the Cartel, to which the moderate Liberals and Conservatives adhered, and thenceforth finding his support among the extreme Conservatives and the Centre. These secret efforts, which went so far as to aim at confronting the Emperor (who was opposed to the new departure) with a *fait accompli*, were already in operation, and had awakened hostility and mistrust in all who were aware of them. They issued finally in the notorious reception of Windhorst by Bismarck, which brought about the rupture with the Emperor.

Of those who were puzzled by the policy of the

Imperial Chancellor, Eulenburg was chief. In the ascendancy of the Ultramontanes and Separatists in Bavaria he had from the first perceived a serious peril to the German Empire. Anyone who is acquainted with German history during the last decade and can see below the surface will admit that he was right. To the rest was added the disagreeable effect of secrecy with which the affair was managed. Even Eulenburg, to whom as prospective Ambassador in Munich the Emperor had ordered that documents relating to Bavaria should be communicated, learnt only by other means of what was going on, for Rantzau ignored the Foreign Office and corresponded direct with Friedrichsruh. Standing as he did sincerely in opposition to the Chancellor's policy, he was completely at a loss when the Emperor told him of Bismarck's intention to alter the constitution of the realm and violently oppose the Social Democrats. True, he disapproved the Bismarckian franchise no less decidedly than he would, in case of need, have approved the application of force against revolutionary attempts. But at the moment he could not see any necessity either for a *coup d'état* or street fighting ; and it seemed to him in the highest degree deplorable that a youthful Emperor should inaugurate his reign by such incidents. He asked himself why Bismarck had chosen this particular time for producing his plans, for which there had been plenty of opportunity under William I. In his later memoranda he speaks of his instantly-awakened suspicion that this policy of force was in the last issue designed solely to make the Emperor, who had already given unwelcome signs of insubordination, totally dependent on the Chancellor. But for the Emperor's intention to continue the original Bismarckian policy by means of legal

protection for the working-man, he was on the contrary, like all the world, enthusiastic. Indeed, what the Emperor proposed was no more than obedience to the imperative necessity of the moment. That the Chancellor of all men should oppose this purpose was incomprehensible. The form his opposition took made it quite impossible for the Emperor's friend to stand by Bismarck when the conflict between Emperor and Chancellor began. Therefore he was convinced that there was only one course—the two must come to an understanding. For that he would do his best. How and why he failed we know from his own statement. He believed that success was possible, if there was good-will on both sides. Good-will he found in the Emperor ; in Bismarck it was absent —hence his sympathies belonged to the Emperor.

No one who judges fairly can fail to decide in his favour. That after Bismarck's retirement Eulenburg should continue to stand by the Emperor was a matter of course. But it was equally a matter of course that he should sacrifice his former relations with the house of Bismarck. All attempts to keep in personal touch with at any rate Herbert were in vain. Warmly-expressed wishes on festal occasions were coldly and formally answered, a meeting was avoided. On February 28, 1893, Eulenburg wrote : " Herbert passed through Munich, and left cards on me so late that I could not return his visit before he went. He had said to Lena Lenbach that personally he would like to see me again, but wanted to avoid awkward explanations." Finally a heartfelt letter after the old Princess's death was left unanswered. That severed even the personal bond ; hatred had prevailed over the remembrance of an old and faithful friendship, politics over human relations.

II

STUTTGART AND MUNICH, 1890-1894

PHILIP EULENBURG'S Oldenburg period did not last more than about a year and a quarter. It had brought him much toil and abundant recognition, and tangible signs of this were not lacking. When in May, 1889, the Brunswick Order of Henry the Lion was bestowed on him as the sixth distinction of the kind he had received in the space of a year, he recorded it with a kind of humorous melancholy : "What rapture this would be for a pot-hunter ! It has lost the only fun it had for me, now that I can no longer enjoy Papa's delight in my glories." In the beginning of March, 1890, his transfer to Stuttgart took place, after Dresden had for a time been considered. His departure from his former sphere of action was much regretted there. "The kind Grand Duke's grief at this change," he wrote, "has truly touched me. He spoke with such cordiality and friendliness as I could not at all have anticipated." The Grand Duke even tried to prevent the transfer, in a letter to the Emperor : "Please leave us Count Eulenburg ! . . . We all earnestly hope this great loss may be spared us. I have taken the greatest liking to the Count, and regard him as a friend." With the Grand Duke of Oldenburg he kept up the most friendly relations. In January, 1891, the Duke thanked him for some poetry he had sent, and added : "I can assure Your Excellency that your departure has left a deplorable gap, and that we often, very often, think of you and feel what a loss

your transfer was for us." And after more than three years had gone by Eulenburg was visited by the old Prince at Starnberg, and had, as he writes, a splendid talk with him.

On May 29, 1890, he took over at Stuttgart, and two days afterwards was presented to the King. He had been obliged to leave his family behind for the present, for he had no house as yet. "I live," he wrote to the Emperor in June, "in the hotel here, and never get out of my frock-coat and the light-grey trousers which one is requested to wear at Court. One's legs have a sort of sociable, cheerful look in these grey garments. Even the morose Mittnacht's big stomach seems to smile in the colour."

The situation at the Royal Court of Württemberg was just then extremely peculiar. King Karl, who was senile and degenerate, had already given offence by questionable male friendships, and for some little time now had been involved with a mechanician at the theatre, of the name of Georges. The affair was not as yet public property, and it was sought to ignore it ; but any day might see an open scandal and enforce a change in the monarchy. Queen Olga, beautiful, intelligent, and dignified, "doubtless long inured to the eccentricity of her consort, has nevertheless entirely given up hope of understanding him—or Germany. She stands like a solitary sunflower in a tract of carpet-bedding : tall, wondering, and out of place." Meanwhile the capable Minister von Mittnacht was governing so independently that he did not even think it necessary to enlighten the Royal pair on the reasons for Bismarck's retirement. "The King argued like a newspaper-reading ignoramus," while the Queen, influenced by the Russian Ambassador, thought the differences between the Emperor and Bismarck

were caused by Russian policy, and that this had brought on the rupture. Moreover, Mittnacht quite openly took Bismarck's part ; he omitted to call on Caprivi when in Berlin, and went instead to Friedrichsruh. Holstein therefore suggested that the new Ambassador should make the Minister feel that he was not indispensable. " Your task will be—during the short time you are there—to fatten up a rival for him."

That in such circumstances Separatism should gain ground was not to be wondered at. King Karl let fall such remarks as, " The Empire after all has no staying-power, and we ought to be preparing to throw in our lot with Austria "—which nevertheless did not prevent him from expressing an almost sentimental admiration for the Emperor. And Holstein was in very pessimistic mood. " From the observations I have made within the last week," he wrote on May 17, " the Empire is on the brink of collapse—if we let things go on as they are."

Eulenburg did not take so gloomy a view. He agreed with the opinion of the Grand Duke of Baden, whom he visited in June and by whom he was received with the utmost graciousness. " The Separatist movements in South Germany are certainly very unwelcome, but they are not important . . . so long as everything is all right *with us*—so long as the Imperial House and the Government show no actual weakness and offer no actual points for attack." In his view the cardinal point was that Prussia should be properly represented at Stuttgart in the military sphere, where solidarity took its most practical form. " Doubtless the Separatist movement in Württemberg will lose ground if for a few years the *unassailable predominance* of a first-class military power in the supreme

position makes itself felt. Unqualified assertion of the right to lead the troops, which is the 'flash-point' between Prussia and Württemberg, must have a tranquillising effect on the situation."

True, this also presented difficulties. Friction was rife in the military sphere especially—of a personal kind for the most part, such as questions of rank and so forth ; but as the treatment was not always tactful, even on the side of the Imperial War Cabinet, the effect was extremely disturbing. When in the summer of 1890 changes in the command were under discussion, mistakes of this kind led to a very awkward difference of opinion. To soothe the irritation at Stuttgart, Caprivi—whose plan of getting rid of the now uncongenial Count Waldersee, by transferring him thither, had been brought to naught—found himself in the position of having for the first time to acquiesce in the appointment of a Württemberg officer as General-Commanding. Eulenburg had advised against the step, because as things were it might be construed into a confession of weakness ; but he found no difficulty in adapting himself to the *fait accompli*.

He knew from the first that Stuttgart would be no more than a transitory abode for him. Long ago he had been designated for Munich, and his transfer thither was only a question of time. Even in March, 1890, at the moment when he was appointed to Stuttgart, it had seemed as though the plan would soon be carried out, for Bismarck's retirement had made his son-in-law's position in Munich uncertain. Eulenburg himself took steps to prevent the immediate issue. Apart from the fact that so rapid a second change would have been disastrous to him, he was of opinion that Rantzau must stay for the present, so as to prevent the impression that everything belonging to Bismarck was

a mark for disfavour. Unfortunately a Bavarian paper raised a very ill-timed agitation for the replacement of Rantzau by Eulenburg—who could only remark "God save me from my friends!" However, things remained as they were for the moment, but Eulenburg was still most definitely designated for Munich. Even from Stuttgart he had to keep up intercourse with the Bavarian capital, and all reports from Rantzau which were in any way important were transmitted to him. He was actually employed for some special missions in Munich itself. Thus in the beginning of June he was obliged to go there, to enlighten the Prince Regent as to the reasons for Bismarck's retirement—a task which certainly could not be entrusted to Bismarck's son-in-law.

Just then there was a crisis in Munich—Minister Lutz had retired on May 31. The Premiership had been taken over by Crailsheim, who was anxious to carry on his predecessor's policy, but had a difficult part to play against the Ultramontane influences at Court, in the country, and now in the Ministry as well. The Imperial Government was to blame for this turn of affairs, for Lutz had ultimately retired because even in Berlin he now found no support. Caprivi had intended to intervene in his favour, but had not acted quickly enough. "We are like the English at Khartoum," wrote Holstein; "we came a day too late to save our man."

That was principally the fault of the Prussian Ambassador in Munich. On his visit in July Eulenburg had to recognise that Rantzau had "lost ground completely with the big guns among the artists, scientists, etc., in Munich, and that is a very bad thing. Werthern *made* the German Empire in Munich by those relations alone. People

revile Rantzau in the warmest language, just as *he* did when the crisis began in Berlin. . . . I spoke to Rantzau—for I have never worked against him in any sort of way—quite frankly."

In the long run the Bavarian Ministry, too, found the situation intolerable. Eulenburg wrote to Holstein about this in September, after a meeting with Crailsheim. He scrupled to inform State-Secretary Baron Marschall as from himself, "for I am too much in the foreground for that, and I cannot bear to have even the *appearance* of working in my own interests. Treat the matter as coming from another source. . . . Crailsheim complained to me, quite dropping his wonted composure, of his distress, saying that he was in an intolerable situation, for he was no longer in direct touch with our Government. Rantzau (he said) had turned out a calamity. He, Crailsheim, could more easily manage Bismarck's son-in-law, if Lerchenfeld would only play fair. But his confidence in him had . . . had a shock."

An extraneous circumstance soon got them out of their difficulties. Imperial Chancellor Caprivi, on a visit to Munich in the beginning of November, had announced the Emperor's desire to inspect the Bavarian troops there. This was the cause of much tribulation, for the Prince-Regent was strongly averse from horseback, and might be deeply distressed by the prospect of having to ride beside the young Emperor, perhaps even be obliged to gallop. Ministers were afraid, or pretended to be afraid, that he might actually think of abdicating to avoid such an embarrassment, and then Prince Ludwig would reign, and with him the Centre Party. Crailsheim represented this to Eulenburg in several letters, begging him for aid in averting the Emperor's threatened visit to the

manœuvres. "This is another case," he added, "which demonstrates how desirable it is that Your Honour should be accredited here. With you there would be ways and means of turning the Emperor from his purpose."

Eulenburg undertook the delicate mission, but his efforts were in vain. Neither Emperor nor Chancellor would be persuaded. About this matter he wrote to the Emperor on November 21 :

> "I cannot conceal from Your Majesty that my activities here behind Rantzau's back—even though I don't personally like him—are very distressing to me. What should *I* feel, as an official, if I had any suspicion that some one else was looking after the most important matters behind my back? And Rantzau has that suspicion."

The Emperor could not but agree ; and as Rantzau's inadequacy had been so glaringly shown up on this occasion that even Caprivi, who would willingly have been indulgent towards Bismarck's son-in-law, had been obliged to admit that he, too, had come to the conviction that Rantzau must go—the decision was taken. On November 27 Holstein informed Eulenburg that by the Emperor's desire his transfer to Munich was in immediate prospect. Eulenburg himself was not altogether pleased. He had begun to feel at home in Stuttgart, and very much liked the city. His house was just ready, after a long and uncomfortable interregnum ; the impending move, his third in the space of two years, was an alarming prospect. He wrote to Holstein in December :

> "One doesn't enjoy dragging six children about in winter. When is the catastrophe to take

place? After all the fuss, I can't in the least realise that things have gone so far—and should like to call attention to the fact that perhaps I shall not come up to your anticipations at Munich. Life has a way of building up myths about people and situations. Woe to him whom destiny causes to belie the legend! Though he were the wisest of men, he will be done for, while the stupidest, if he carries it out, may turn into an heroic figure!"

Moreover, it distressed him that the diplomat who was to succeed him at Stuttgart regarded the transfer as a blow to his personal interests. Of this Eulenburg wrote to Holstein:

"S——'s letter has upset me in some ways. You have no idea *how* I hate being the cause of such catastrophes! I should be ever so much happier if I were quietly at home at Liebenberg, and if everybody would really believe that I 'want nothing.'" But he added: "I don't wish to represent my heart as a sepulchre of remorse, or in any way insist that I am not most extraordinarily delighted about going to Munich, where I have a thousand ties, and am firmly rooted in the artistic, scientific, and poetical life of the place."

Some months were to go by, however, before the decision could be carried out. Munich had first to be evacuated—Rantzau of course falling on his feet at the Hague. But Eulenburg was able to give the Minister confidentially to understand what was in prospect. Crailsheim answered:

"The . . . intimation . . . fills me with satisfaction; an uncomfortable state of affairs will give place to the pleasantest imaginable. It is true

that what you tell me is a source of real personal regret, but that feeling must yield to the anticipation of a fair future."

At the Stuttgart Court there was great dissatisfaction when the impending change was made known in February, 1891. Eulenburg wrote to Holstein :

" My transfer has made very bad blood ; and it seems to me essential, in such circumstances, that H.M. should write an autograph letter to King Karl explaining my abrupt departure—or rather that H.M. should write a few courteous words, for any real explanation is unthinkable with the extremely indiscreet monarch. I have made H.M. a direct request in this sense ; in case nothing comes of it, perhaps Herr v. Marschall would have the goodness to arrange it. It is very awkward for me to represent myself as so much-beloved a personage ! But for the sake of the cause, I cannot avoid it. King and Queen make one declaration of love after another to me and my wife ! It is to be hoped the King will not (like the Oldenburg Grand Duke) write directly to the Emperor, wanting to nail me down in Stuttgart. I should not like that at all ! My transfer is looked upon at Court as a ' symptom of uneasiness ' ; and it is *absolutely* necessary to get H.M. to do something polite."

He was to bid farewell to Stuttgart on April 1. He left many friends behind him there, and even from Munich he kept up relations with them—especially with Prince Wilhelm, who in the same year was to become King Wilhelm II. He wrote to the Emperor : " There were tender farewells in Stuttgart. Prince Wilhelm begged me to come at

once in case of a crisis. I willingly agreed, but I could not help laughing, for my relations with nearly all the German Courts are getting a little onerous." In later years Eulenburg repeatedly stayed at Stuttgart, or for shooting at Bebenhausen, as the King's guest, always warmly welcomed ; and he was honoured by a very confidential correspondence.

The move to the well-known and beloved Munich was delayed by illness among the children. On April 10 the new Ambassador was received by the Prince Regent with all the stately ceremonial customary in those bygone days. "I have not a scrap of the solemnity proper to such occasions," Eulenburg noted. It was not until after April 30 that the family could take the road, "with six children, twelve grown-ups, four canary-birds, and the accompanying luggage—twenty pieces."

His reception by the Government and in society was the warmest imaginable. He told Marschall of it :

> "I was welcomed with universal and apparently sincere jubilation—probably because they know my love for beautiful Bavaria, and *think* I am safe not to give the Government any trouble in its blue-and-white activities.[1] The abuse of Rantzau is such that I try to avoid ever talking about him. . . . My work will at first be confined to reknitting the *utterly* dropped threads which kept the Prussian Embassy in touch with representatives of the most various opinions, and quietly making audible the voice of reason."

Eulenburg had already perceived that this would be a very difficult task. His predecessor, to be

[1] The colours of the Bavarian flag.

sure, made a good foil. "Crailsheim is fuming with rage against Rantzau, who was tactless with him"; so a letter to Holstein reported. But the picture of the situation drawn for him by a friendly and sincerely Germanophil member of the Bavarian nobility was not encouraging. It dated from 1888:

> "You will find Munich very much altered. The new régime has managed, with equal tactlessness and cunning, to suppress Imperial sentiment and emphasise the Separatist point of view . . . Imperial sentiment is now well on the decline . . . and the more so since Bismarck's departure, because distrust of the Emperor is carefully sown in all directions. Last spring there was talk of the Emperor's folly at beer-parties, wine-parties, tea-parties; this year they confine themselves to his nervous temperament, his rashness, etc. Anyone who might have tried to act the part of resolute *advocatus imperatoris* would long ago have been called over the coals—but there was no such person! That is for *you* to be; but you will have a tough job, I can assure you, to convince the pack of them—all gloating over any ill-luck or difficulty that turns up."

The job was indeed a tough one, and was to grow tougher with time. Prussia and the Empire had lost too much ground since 1888, and to recover it completely seemed scarcely possible. However, the Emperor's very successful visit to Munich in the autumn of 1891 was one fruit of Eulenburg's endeavours. Crailsheim wrote to the Ambassador: "I am still overjoyed at the successful Imperial visit. And my joy is mingled with gratitude to you, who gave yourself so much trouble, so single-heartedly and with such fruitful results, to do

everything that might further our wishes, and nothing that could prejudice them." Even Holstein was satisfied. "I am not surprised at your having done most of the good work—I expected nothing else."

But such things were only *succès d'occasion.* Separatist feeling, fostered as of yore from high quarters, increased rather than diminished. The year 1893 provided a startling instance. A master in a Munich school had received a gracious acknowledgment of some patriotic German poems which he had sent to the Emperor. His superiors, however, administered a reprimand, because his verses had not alluded to the blue-and-white flag. The Minister of Education, appealed to, approved of the censure. Eulenburg, who happened to hear of it, succeeded—by turning on the Press and giving a hint of consequences from Berlin—in forcing the Minister to apologise, and obtaining promotion for the gallant patriot.

But these petty triumphs could not blind him to the fact that the situation was becoming more and more unpleasant. "I can tell you," he wrote to Holstein in March, 1893, "that this is no bed of roses, and one pair of eyes and ears can't do much to help a man out." What most disturbed him was the reckless and shameless anti-Prussianism which the *Bayerische Vaterland*, one of the most pernicious gutter-rags in all Germany, gratuitously preached from day to day, and which was eagerly copied by French journals. It was not easy to take legal measures against this effrontery, because trial by jury was the procedure for Press cases in Bavaria, and such a tribunal would certainly have acquitted the editor. This was an occasion on which Eulenburg for once lost his head. He wrote in March to Kiderlen :

"I shan't give in easily, and shall rack my brains to discover some way by which I can attack this scandal. If we German Confederate States are to present foreign countries with the *deplorable* spectacle of our dominions reviling one another like hostile nations divided by secular hatreds, we are not fit to be called the 'German Empire,' and ought not to be surprised if our neighbours to east and west question the internal stability of our union. Either the Federal Council must take steps to preserve our dignity against offences inflicted by the Press upon our nationalities, and to prevent our hostile neighbours from conceiving such suspicions as the above—or we must establish a *United State* and clap every one into prison who abuses Prussia! These are methods worth considering, in order to put pressure upon the Government here."

A supplementary duty of the Munich Ambassador's was keeping an eye on the Papal Nuncio. It was easier for Eulenburg, because in his particular Nuncio—subsequently Cardinal Agliardi, an opponent of Rampolla—he found an adherent to the monarchical system and a friend of Cardinal Kopp and the Germans. With this genial and moderate man he got on well. But none the less it was always to be remembered that every Nuncio is attended by a spy in the person of his *uditore*. Eulenburg, in his turn, learnt this lesson; and he was fond of telling, in later years, how during an interview in the Nuncio's room he—under the pretext of having seen a mouse—suddenly flung open the door and in doing so thrust it, as he expected, against the portly stomach of the eavesdropping *uditore*.

The situation in Munich offered, in general,

various opportunities for following the policy of the Curia and the Catholic movement in Germany. Eulenburg had special sources of information. He had only a passing acquaintance with Döllinger, but it was enough for him to form an opinion : " The only explanation I can find for Bismarck's incredible error of believing in the possibility of effecting a breach in the Papacy through men of the tone and social position of Döllinger is that Bismarck never spent several years of his life in a Catholic country." Cardinal Hohenlohe had seen a great deal of Eulenburg during a long stay in Munich, and discussed the interior relations in the Vatican with him very openly indeed. Another source of the most valuable kind was his correspondence with Franz Xavier Kraus, the respected Professor of ecclesiastical history in Freiburg, and author of the famous *Spektator-briefe*, than whom no man living knew more of both the open and the secret proceedings of Catholic ecclesiastical policy. Thus Eulenburg was able, sooner than others, to realise the various dangers threatening all monarchies, and especially the German Empire, from the Roman quarter, since republican and democratic feeling had there gained ground under Jesuit leadership. He did not fail to transmit the valuable memoranda with which Kraus supplied him to the Emperor. One of these proved useful as a basis for the interview in 1893 with Leo XIII. On the Emperor's way to Rome, Eulenburg joined him in the train when passing through the Tyrol, and went some distance with him. He recorded the meeting : " I had an opportunity of talking very exhaustively with the Emperor about the political side of the visit to Rome, and giving him some notes ' to take to heart,' which he most benignly promised to do. He showed me, too,

my last long letter to him as well as the memorandum by Kraus, and said with a twinkle in his eye : ' I'm cramming it up already.' " The information does not seem to have been fruitless. At any rate the diary notes after the Emperor's return : " Holstein gave me the Emperor's memorandum of his interview with the Pope. H.M. based his remarks on the proposals I made, and entered a complaint which was very spirited without being in any way unpalatable." The complaint had reference to the support which the democratic movement was receiving from the Church.

Among the foreign diplomats in Munich during these years was one who even to-day plays a great part in Europe : the French Ambassador, Camille Barrère, subsequently Ambassador in Rome for many years. His Government wanted to make him Ambassador in Berlin in 1891, but this was not smiled upon. There were special reasons for that. Eulenburg described this interesting man in a characteristic little sketch, which must find a place here :

" The Ambassador Barrère has a history. A descendant of that Barrère who during the Terror sent thousands to the guillotine, he was himself much in the foreground when the Commune was devastating Paris in 1871, and was condemned to death by the Republican Government, when order was restored under Marshal Macmahon. Barrère succeeded in escaping to England, where he earned his bread by giving lessons in the French language. He changed his name.

" When Cambon [1] became Ambassador in

[1] There is a confusion of names here. The French Ambassadors in London under Macmahon were first Comte Jarnac, then (from 1875) the Marquis d'Harcourt.

London, Barrère managed to get himself appointed as tutor—in mathematics, if I do not mistake—to Cambon's children, for under his false name, and thanks to his agreeable manners in Society, he was much respected. The clever young man took the Ambassador's fancy, and as he wanted a private secretary, he installed Barrère in his house in that capacity.

"When Cambon some years later was obliged to go on official duty to Paris, he took Barrère with him, because his Secretary of Embassy was not at the moment available. That was the great crisis in Barrère's life—and he made good use of it. When the English boat reached Calais, and Cambon was packing up in his cabin, Barrère suddenly threw himself at his feet and declared that he must return to England by the same boat, for he, condemned to death, might never again set foot on his beloved native soil. His name, he said, was Barrère, and he begged the Ambassador's forgiveness from the depths of his heart for having deceived him.

"It was a very embarrassing situation for Cambon. He could not put through the urgent affairs with the President without a secretary. He overcame his scruples and said he would take full responsibility for Barrère. His advocacy obtained a pardon for the talented young man—and also a Secretaryship of Embassy for the private secretary, who now advanced by leaps and bounds. As a colleague in Munich I found Barrère a very agreeable companion. His wife, too, was charming, and my children used to play with theirs. Soon after I left Munich, he became Ambassador in Rome at the Quirinal, where he may be regarded as one of the most

dangerous instruments of that policy with which France, as the representative of republican ideas, infects the Roman populace. Absolutely unscrupulous, Barrère will one day make himself heard of."

Eulenburg got on very well with the Russian Ambassador, Count Osten-Sacken. He found in him "a primitive type of the bluff aristocrat, inspired by one wish and one idea—to see Russia allied with Germany." Eulenburg afterwards helped to procure him the Berlin Embassy. In Munich the Russian once did him a great service, when Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria made advances, in 1893, for the hand of a Bavarian Princess. Ministers were divided in their minds—until Eulenburg set the Russian Ambassador at their throats. That put an end to the scheme, whose execution would have created great tension between Germany and Russia.

During those years it once happened that the Ambassador in Munich was publicly named and attacked in connection with a big political question. At the beginning of 1892 Count Zedlitz brought in a bill permitting the introduction of the confessional system into the national schools of Prussia, and all Germany was in a turmoil. Eulenburg's religious and political convictions would have been in sympathy with the bill.[1] But as Ambassador in Munich it was his duty to keep in view the reaction of this measure upon Bavarian and German Imperial policy in the South ; and it was clear that

[1] He once spoke openly to Holstein about his attitude towards these questions, referring to the bigoted orthodoxy of which Waldersee had been an adherent : "I am a believing Christian," he said, "and think that *one-sidedness* is a bad service to God—even in the sphere of Christendom. We desire to honour God by governing *reasonably* in all things."

the consequences could only be mischievous. An educational measure in Prussia which went so far to meet Catholic wishes would inevitably be grist to the Bavarian Ultramontane mill, and breed disaffection in Liberal circles, which alone were loyal to the Empire. The effect this might have upon Imperial politics in general was incalculable.

Eulenburg had already noted a very significant sign of the times—by the Regent's desire the Emperor's birthday on January 27, 1892, was not celebrated by the officers of the garrison or the city of Munich. Therefore he resolved, against his personal inclination and though but partly recovered from severe illness, to do what lay in his power to defeat the measure, to which the Imperial Chancellor Caprivi had given warm support, and which had a safe majority in its favour in the Prussian Landtag. He laid his views before the Emperor and Chancellor in letters to both. To the Emperor he wrote :

" Munich, *January* 28, 1892.

" Your Majesty gets no peace from me, even when I am confined to a sick-room. I see by the papers here, and by various communications made to me, what the effect will be for the Empire of the school-regulation. . . . I do not know whether Count Zedlitz takes account of these dangers—I should be inclined to doubt it, and to believe that it would be of great benefit to Your Majesty if Your Majesty would talk over the situation with him. In my *official* position, I am bound to give a clear idea of the effect which has been produced here. *Personal* opinions have nothing to say in the matter. . . . I think, too, that if, after an interview with Zedlitz, it came to people's ears that Your Majesty's attitude is

a very moderate one, the best effect would be produced in *all quarters*, and that would help to smoothe things down.

"I am slowly getting better. I don't seem quite able to get over this, and my work doesn't go well. It is a sore trial of patience!"

To the Imperial Chancellor he wrote, after some preliminary remarks:

"It is painful for me to perceive beyond all doubt that the distrust which has now taken possession of the loyal elements is being worked upon very powerfully from the Separatist side. A striking symptom of how far things have gone in this direction will be evident to Your Excellency when I tell you that at a secret committee of the Royal Treasury for discussion of the latest Imperial loan, a very highly-placed and very influential Court functionary declared that he could not give his consent, because the German Empire can 'no longer offer a gilt-edged security.'"

These repeated representations bore fruit. The Emperor gave no support to the proposed policy, and Count Zedlitz had to go. Caprivi, who had been unnecessarily loud in his defence, resigned the Premiership, Count Botho Eulenburg replaced him, and the measure was withdrawn. This solution was likewise owing in some sort to Eulenburg's influence. On hearing that Caprivi had sent in his resignation, he had written circumstantially to him as well as to the Emperor, pointing out the serious consequences which an Imperial Chancellor's retreat might have in the then disturbed state of public opinion. The situation was extremely critical, for the Emperor, stricken to the

heart, had (as he often did in later days) isolated himself at Hubertusstock. Holstein wrote of this on March 19 : " I think it positively shocking that at this terribly important moment the Emperor should be stuck at Hubertusstock with a couple of aides-de-camp. It really is something like Louis XVI. And who knows what will be decided there, without a reasonable creature to consult ! You alone can break the magic circle ; reflect upon that ! " Eulenburg had already written and said so exactly the right thing that Holstein telegraphed next day : " Letters both models of their kind."

The part played by the Ambassador in Munich in these proceedings soon became to some extent public knowledge. The Centre Press attacked Eulenburg, and in the Bavarian Landtag a deputy named Orterer called the Prime Minister to account on the matter. Investigations into the source of this indiscretion proved that Caprivi himself had blabbed to a member of the Centre Party after dinner. This wrung from Eulenburg, in a letter to Holstein, the plaintive cry : " When will Caprivi make the sensational discovery that human beings are only half angels ? " To which Holstein rejoined :

> " Your astonishment at the source of the indiscretion alluded to is not shared by the political department. We know the idiosyncracies of the Imperial Chancellor, and were therefore convinced beforehand that it was he who had let the cat out of the bag. I don't regard it as so very serious. That you should have reported as you did was your right and your duty."

For the rest, Holstein regarded the incident as nothing but a fortunate one for Eulenburg. He had written so early as March 23 :

"In my opinion the fact that the *Germania* is dragging you into the foreground makes you the focus of Imperial sentiment in your part of the world, and the public sees, moreover, that after all you *are* something more than *l'ami du roi*." Now he wrote: "What do I think of Orterer? I rejoice in him. Hitherto you have been 'somebody' at Court; now you are gradually becoming 'somebody' in politics. The millions of imperially-minded people who were against the Education Bill now know that you went into the thick of the fight in the execution of your official functions."

To his cousin, the new Prime Minister, Eulenburg summarised his impressions as follows:

> "After the last Imperial manœuvres and subsequently the commercial treaties had *at last* improved the situation in South Germany . . . the Education Bill brought everything down with a run. Separatism held veritable orgies. How the Empire is to be knitted together again I don't quite see, in view of the military demands."

Eulenburg was not, in general, of one mind with the Imperial Chancellor in his view of German affairs at this juncture, and his programme of leaning on the Federal *Governments*. He wrote to his cousin:

> "Anyone who, like myself, has had to do with South German Ultramontane policy for many years, must find the smell of this ragout somewhat too strong. Unfortunately not all Prussians have that experience and that nose. Even in very highly-placed Prussians such a nose is lacking. Therefore the Caprivi idea of leaning on the Federal *Governments*, 'because a revolutionary spirit is abroad in Germany and the

time for leaning on *political parties* is gone by ' is not feasible in all the Federal States. In Bavaria, for instance, we can make use *only* of a Government which leans on the National Liberal Parties in the country—hence we cannot do without the National Liberal Party, and *must lean on* it, unless we wish to lose ground completely in South Germany. Caprivi's remark in his speech on the Education Bill that ' we are all imperially-minded ' is a Prussian fallacy."

To the Emperor also Eulenburg verbally set forth this process of thought. This was in the July of the same year, during the Norwegian cruise, in a tête-à-tête conversation which he noted down for himself.

The Emperor : I don't even now understand a remark which Prince Bismarck once made to me. His purpose is not clear to me, and there always were purposes lurking behind all his ideas. He said : ' The German Empire is all very well—lala ! But you must try to make only *Prussia* powerful. It doesn't matter what becomes of the rest.' I saw a sort of trap for me in that—an attempt to embroil me with the Federal Princes by gruffness and intolerance. But I may have been mistaken.

Eulenburg : In this instance I should not say that the Prince had any *arrière-pensée*. For the strength of the Empire a predominant Prussia is a *necessary* condition—a strong Prussia, even at the expense of the Federal States. The self-consciousness of the Federal States must be made subject to the preponderance of Prussia, for too marked a self-consciousness in such States gives rise to a decentralising policy, in which there lies a danger for Germany. By giving practical

proof of Prussia's great preponderance, and by the constant increase of Prussia's authority, the unity of the Empire will be guaranteed ; *not* by the strengthening of the Federal States. We Prussians have become great through roughness and unconditional obedience to duty ; that is the mark of our character, our strength and preponderance, which we—perhaps regrettably—are not able to shed. I lay emphasis on this, because Chancellor Caprivi seems to err in that respect. Twice in writing, and once by word of mouth, he stated to me as his programme that the German Empire was guaranteed as absolute and that we must lean on the Federal *Governments*. He gives practical proofs of this programme by a courtesy which is regarded as weakness.

The Emperor : I think he means the Federal Princes, and not the Governments. The Federal Princes must hold together against revolutionary ideas.

Eulenburg : That is a matter of course, once the revolutionary element rises to the surface. But the Imperial Chancellor means the *Governments*. We can, however, use the Governments as a fulcrum *only* if they themselves lean on the loyal Imperial parties in their countries. If they obey the Separatist interests, we, if we rely upon them, shall be digging Prussia's grave. Your Majesty knows that I am no fire-eater ; and so in all unimportant matters I shall show the utmost possible politeness. And Your Majesty, too, will but further the Imperial idea by the most amiable personal intercourse with the Federal Princes. In serious matters, though, in every question of political importance, our power must be manifested by a *certain asperity*, and I beseech Your Majesty to keep this always in mind. That

remark of Prince Bismarck's had no double meaning.

The Emperor : I am glad that you have drawn my attention to this point ; it is important enough to be kept in view.

Though Eulenburg was not in agreement with Caprivi on an essential point of German policy, he was entirely with him on a question which in time became for Bismarck's successor the most important of all—his relations with the Prussian Conservatives and Agrarians. In February, 1893, he wrote to the Chancellor :

"I have refused an invitation to join the Landlords' League. Like Your Excellency I am a staunch Conservative, and even though suffering under the strain put upon the landlords, can only stand firmly and loyally behind Your Excellency in this question. I want no Landlords' League, and I shall always be glad when I can represent that point of view in the presence of aggressive land-owners—indeed I *have* represented it often enough to land-owning relations and friends ! I am unable to separate the Landlords' League from politics. Home and foreign politics are nowadays based upon questions of national economy. The League is indeed a fresh symptom of the ferment which the parliamentary callowness of Young Germany has set up, and which has taken such sinister forms in consequence of the mistake made at the birth of the Empire—I mean universal franchise."

He made an open confession of his views on these matters in the following letter to Kiderlen :

"Prökelwitz, *May* 25, 1892.

"Best thanks for your two charming and amusing letters. We are leading an ideal existence here, as much at home with H.M. as on the "Hohenzollern." There is as little room in the house as on the ship, and the infinite stretch of the country is like the sea. All the political flutes are silent. Roebuck, music, and the incidents of daily life—how one slept, what one dreamt of, what one has eaten and drunk—form our topics, as you know from many occasions on the "Hohenzollern." I found H.M., whom on account of my illness I had not seen for ages, in excellent feather and completely dispassionate when he spoke to me of last winter's events. What brought this up was Herr Orterer's attack on me in Munich—H.M., too, thinks it was calculated to direct universal attention to the elements which make up the Centre Party. In the course of our talk the interesting fact came out that H.M. still, as before and since the beginning of the Education Bill affair, takes the ground that important political questions should be treated only on the basis of negotiation between the *moderate* parties. The Emperor said in so many words: 'I have *always* expressed myself in that sense to Conservative members of all shades of opinion, and taken the greatest trouble to do it. Every single one of the Conservatives *knows* that, and it is mere malevolence which makes anyone say otherwise. I confess that the future of the Party looks to me very black. The submission of the moderate elements to pressure from the extreme wing will be the ruin of the Party. They have only themselves to blame. It's a mystery to me how sensible, order-loving people can allow themselves to be bullied by the

Hammerstein Press. They are rushing to destruction with their eyes open.'

"It was interesting to me as a moderate Conservative to hear this utterance of the Emperor's; but I fear that it will have *no* effect on the Party's new programme, of which I have read in the papers—even though I imparted it to one of the Conservative guests here. I share H.M.'s depression in this respect. But I own that I regard it as disgraceful for men who profess to belong to a loyal Party *not* to yield to their Sovereign's wishes, when his one object is to strengthen the Party in conformity with the spirit of the age, by increasing the influence of the *moderate* elements. That they would never regret a solution of these questions in the Emperor's sense, I can guarantee from my knowledge of his character.

"But in this peaceful country-holiday, having no perils from abroad of any kind to encounter, I am going too deep into 'domesticities!' However, you will understand the anger of a Conservative who knows what his sovereign wants, and sees his party swimming in a stream so turbid and yellow as the Tiber."

In after-years as well Eulenburg had similar criticisms—sometimes indeed still sharper ones—to make on his natural political friends. At the time when Count Bülow was striving to win over the Conservative Agrarians for the Canal project, by meeting their views in other matters, Eulenburg prophesied his disappointment. "The thick-headedness of our Junkers," he wrote to Bülow in March, 1901, "has something bovine about it. For discipline and in the field—that is to say, in war—they are magnificent. But on the grass lawns of civilisation, which in their stolid eyes are

unchangeably their native swamp—unmanageable, barbarian. They do not *recognise* the dangers."

As Ambassador in Munich Eulenburg once had an opportunity of energetically and effectively opposing the Agrarian-Conservative Party. It was in the beginning of 1894, when the commercial treaty with Russia was put to the vote, and bitterly opposed by the Prussian Conservatives. In Bavaria, too, it met with opposition. Among other demands was one for suspending the Prussian railway tariffs in Bavaria's interests. These facilitated Russian imports, but were valuable for Prussian finances. The Imperial Government—that is to say Caprivi and Marschall—were ready to meet Bavarian views, in order not to endanger the treaty ; the Prussian Ministers of State resisted. It was feared that in Berlin the Chancellor and Secretary of State, in Munich the Crailsheim Ministry, might resign. The consequences would have been incalculable. Therefore Eulenburg put all his energies into working for a compromise in both places, and did finally achieve his purpose, thanks not least to his efforts with the Emperor. The value of his services was gratefully recognised. Marschall wrote :

> " After many stormy days I can at last express to you my hearty thanks for the solution you have so successfully achieved. Without your help a crisis was unavoidable, and it is difficult to say what that might have meant at the present moment."

An impartial witness, Bernard Bülow, who had been in Munich during the decisive days, confirmed this judgment. He wrote : " You managed the

tariff question too, and by so doing rendered yet another great service to the country." And again : " Without your energetic and able intervention in the tariff question, it is my opinion that the treaty would never have gone through."

III

BETWEEN EMPEROR AND GOVERNMENT

THAT the Emperor's intimate friend, even though only Ambassador at a German Court, should be frequently requisitioned for services far removed from his official sphere lay in the nature of things. It happened continually, and the coils which in this way he had to manipulate were of the most varied descriptions. To be the confidant of the Imperial Household, as he was both by word of mouth and correspondence, was perhaps the least of his responsibilities, though it too, was arduous when the Empress poured out her heart to him about all the family conflicts and enmities. A special item in this programme was represented by the ever recurrent, perpetually altered, and always impossible marriage projects of the Emperor's brother-in-law, Duke Gunther von Holstein. On one occasion these actually threatened to produce dangerous political developments, when the Prince one day—it was in the spring of 1894—took it into his head that he might marry Princess Hélène d'Orléans. This desire was probably instilled into him by members of the House of Orleans, who hoped to improve their prospects of wearing the French crown by connecting themselves with the German Emperor. Fortunately in this, as in all similar instances, the skilled hand of the adviser called to the Imperial couple's aid succeeded in annihilating the precarious plan. But even if one could enumerate all these special cases, one would have not come

anywhere near exhausting the list of Eulenburg's activities. They were in truth of a unique nature. In order to understand and appreciate their significance, we must remember the situation in which Emperor and Empire were placed when on March 19, 1890, Bismarck was obliged to remove his hand from the rudder.

In plain words, on that day the Government was beheaded. The Emperor might think, if he liked, that he himself was now the head. But in that he deceived himself. Neither then nor later did he hold the Governmental reins. Even if his restless manner of life had not precluded his doing any thorough and consecutive work, his complete lack of statecraft and experience would have made it impossible for him really to govern. Imperial Chancellor Caprivi, as well as the Foreign Secretary, Baron von Marschall, were much too new in their offices to figure as leading personalities. These two men had done enough when they represented the Empire abroad with dignity and tact. More could not reasonably be expected of them. A carriage drawn by a team of horses old and young, unaccustomed to each others' paces, and with no coachman on the box—such was the German Empire at this period.

And now it happened that the reluctantly unseated coachman began to throw between the wheels as many stones and other missiles as he could pick up, thus making the horses shy across the road. Many people expected nothing but the upsetting of the carriage at the next turn, and it seems almost a miracle that this did not come to pass. Whenever Eulenburg spoke reminiscently of that period he always gave the credit to the Prussian Civil Service, whose officials had managed to uphold the State against the onslaughts of even the greatest of its

functionaries. Doubtless he was right. Without the loyalty shown by Prussian officials to their Government, the latter could not have functioned at all. But this merely means that the coach of State did not stand still. That it was not run away with—for this there was another reason. The officials alone, loyal and capable as they might be, could not have averted that danger if the coach had not been guided in some fashion. It *was* so guided, only it was not a single hand that held the reins—but the hands of a group of men.

The years after 1890, period of the so-called "new departure," may be best described as the régime of the political department of the Foreign Office. There sat the predominant intelligence, in the person of Herr von Holstein—by age, experience, authority, and intellectual pre-eminence leader of the group. At his side stood the Councillors who supported him, chief of them the shrewd and energetic Kiderlen-Wächter. They formed, so to speak, the silent Directory which guided the Imperial Chancellor and the Secretary of State, and did not fail to influence the Prussian Ministry. The work of these men was, however, rendered possible and successful only because Philip Eulenburg stood by them.

Public attention was not for some time drawn to this. Then, in the beginning of 1894, *Kladderadatsch* instituted a regular campaign of derision against the alleged secret triumvirate of Holstein—Kiderlen—Eulenburg. Eulenburg, plainly designated as "Count Troubadour," was the least severely satirised, and after some time was quite dropped out of the game. He had known how to make himself feared—had shown his teeth so unmistakably to one of the two authors, whose names he had guessed (they were, incredible as it seems,

two Secretaries of Legation at the Foreign Office), that the gentleman thought better of irritating the Emperor's friend. And yet, if it was desired to overthrow the system, he was the very one who ought most to have been attacked. For though not the leader of the group, he was their indispensable stand-by. But for his influence over the Emperor this "*Ersatz*-Government"—if the expression may be permitted—would not have lasted three months. It was entirely owing to him that the link between the Sovereign and the official organs of Government was not destroyed. Afterwards he himself defined his function, as he saw it, in these words: "*To keep the Emperor's connection with his Government going as far as I could.*" If we seek a phrase which will rightly convey this peculiar position of his, we can find no better than the title of Ambassador of the German Government to the Emperor.

This exceptional position was unhesitatingly recognised by the new Foreign Secretary. Seldom has a Chief written his subordinate such a letter as did Herr von Marschall when on April 13, 1890, he answered the Oldenburg Ambassador's congratulations:

> "Whether I shall be able to justify H.M.'s trust in me I do not know, but I shall do my very utmost to that end. If I feel a certain degree of confidence in setting to work, I owe that feeling not least to the kind, cordial words which you have been so good as to say to me. The confidence and friendly feeling that you offer me, I respond to with the heartfelt request that you will help me further by word and deed, in case of necessity, as also by unhesitating criticism."

A foretaste of what would henceforth be required of him was afforded to Eulenburg in the first days

of the new régime. At the beginning of April there was an article in the *Reichsanzeiger*, which sounded a note so friendly to Labour that it had the effect of an encouragement to the Social Democrats. It was generally thought to represent the Emperor's views, and caused no little uneasiness. The Emperor, so people said, had gone over to the Social Democrats! Eulenburg got agitated letters from Holstein, Privy-Councillor Kayser, and Dr. Fischer (who represented the *Kölnische Zeitung*)—all urging him to warn the Emperor. Simultaneously he had news from South-Germany of the bad effect created there. So he decided to speak out to the Emperor; sent him Fischer's letter, and added the following exhortation:

"I want to beg Your Majesty no less humbly than earnestly *not now*—after the institution of the Council of State and the Conference—to envisage an extended programme. The whole of Germany is in a state of nervous tension since the retirement of Prince Bismarck and the recent changes. It needs a quiet sleep, like a feverish patient, before it can recover. Your Majesty at Berlin expressed the intention of stopping short for the present at the reforms discussed by the Council and the Conference. Hence I cannot explain to myself the origin of the official article in the *Reichsanzeiger*. Fischer's observations regarding the temper in the country I must—so far as Bavaria and Württemburg are concerned—unfortunately confirm."

The Emperor's telegraphic reply was a surprise.

"Best thanks for letter, etc. The articles in *Staatsanzeiger* were, without consulting anyone whatever in the Government, printed for the

private delectation of von Klee and Tepper-Laski" (both were connected with the *Reichs-anzeiger*). "I only heard of their existence through the comments of foreign newspapers. I have given it to be understood that I desire both blackguards to get a good kick on their behinds. I had nothing whatever to do with the whole business."

Thus subordinates, in their officious zeal, had been able to make mischief, because there was no firm hand on the reins, and no close continual contact between the Emperor and his official organs.

Immediately afterwards there was a more serious instance. The Emperor had so plainly shown his desire for a nearer approach to France that the reaction in England and Italy was already perceptible. Both countries were showing marked eagerness to draw closer to France. Eulenburg had again, at Holstein's and Kiderlen's request, to warn the Emperor. He did so by word of mouth, when he was with him at Bremen at the end of April, 1890. And so it went on unceasingly. Almost daily, often several times a day, letters came to him from the Foreign Office. Holstein was usually the writer, or he would wire, sometimes openly, sometimes in cipher: "For goodness' sake, do this—say that. There is danger afoot, if you don't make it clear to the Emperor that this must not be done—or that that must." Now it would be to remove an undesirable influence, now to encourage one of the approved nature. And, moreover, the views of the Foreign Office and the personal schemes of Holstein were at times parallel, but now and then there would be confusion or opposition. Only a complete survey of all the

correspondence, consisting of many hundred documents, could give any idea of the labour thrust upon the Ambassador by his superiors. He accepted it in the service of his Emperor and country. Generally speaking, he obeyed the indications given him, so far as they agreed with his views—he never permitted himself to be made a blind instrument. We shall soon find instances in which he did not act at all, or acted differently from those indications; and usually he toned things down, took off the edge.

Holstein's expectations were often very far-reaching indeed. It was comparatively little for the chief Privy Councillor to bid the Ambassador put into the Emperor's mouth what he ought to say. Thus Holstein wrote in October, 1892:

"As you will see by the telegram from Petersburg forwarded by post to-day, the Grand Duke Vladimir arrives here from Petersburg on Wednesday, and will probably stay two days. H.M. ought certainly to show him some hospitality—a shoot or something of that sort. The Grand Duke is one of those Russians whom one can occasionally use as a speaking-trumpet. This time nothing should be said to him about Muraviev" (a very much disliked Councillor of Embassy in Berlin, subsequently Foreign Minister for Russia). "Werder can do that.[1] *Non bis in idem.* Besides it is unnecessary just now to put Muraviev in a nastier temper than usual, since we have to treat with him further about this disgusting Kiliani business. If the conversation turns on Tschischkin" (Under-Secretary of State to Giers and, unlike Giers, by no means Germanophil), "perhaps H.M. could say to the

[1] He was Ambassador in Petersburg.

Grand Duke, 'He is a bureaucrat, *nicht wahr*—not a *diplomat de carrière?*' Not more. For disparagement here might be a credit to him there.

"A useful subject for conversation would be: 'With a Conservative Russia, despite all momentary irritations, *nous finirons par nous entendre*. But the Radicals in every country, whether their names are Miljutin or Imbriani,[1] cannot but abhor us, and feel more in sympathy with the Republic.' General remarks which are in no sense binding—merely leave a door open for the future.

"In case the Grand Duke goes more deeply into policy, plain speaking might be useful: 'If I considered war to be inevitable, now would be the propitious moment, when we have the new gun and you have not. But I trust it is not inevitable. Whether I am right, the future will show.' Upon the Tsar, who with all his faults is honourable and peace-loving, though distrustful and timorous, such a frank soldierly speech, the sort of speech he understands, would have more effect than practised diplomacy."

Small wonder that in this correspondence personal questions filled a large place. All politics are indeed a conflict of personalities for power, influence, prestige: and that this conflict should here take the most personal of forms was ensured by the character of Holstein. Even in Bismarck's day he had tried to use Eulenburg as a channel for his personal policy. Here is an instance. The Emperor had announced his intended presence at a beer-supper at the Bavarian Ambassador's,

[1] Miljutin was the anti-German, secretly revolutionary Russian War Minister. Imbriani was a republican Hotspur in Italy.

Count Lerchenfeld's, whom Holstein regarded with peculiar antipathy. He therefore urged upon Eulenburg that he should dissuade the Emperor from the proceeding, because such a mark of favour to the Ambassador would weaken Lutz's Ministry ! When Bismarck had gone, the secret battle of the Foreign Office was waged in all its intensity against Waldersee. The ambitious and masterful Chief of the High Command, who was feared, must be got out of the way ; and again it was Eulenburg who was wanted to be foremost in the work. So in October, 1890, there was this : " It is very important that I should see you before you see the Emperor. . . . You must be fully informed . . . I take a very serious view of the wire-pulling, and want to give you your bearings before you see people." Soon the truth came out : " Waldersee must go. He would be an inconvenience in case of war, for the Emperor does not respect him. But he mustn't be made Ambassador either, for then he would be dangerous to Caprivi. Also you must utter a warning against Count Wedel, who is trying for the Petersburg Embassy. In general, take a stand against the idea that military men are more reliable than civilians." Two days later : " Waldersee will have to fall now, because Stocken has been dismissed. Then the Emperor will have at one stroke the whole nation, except the *Kreuzzeitung* lot, on his side. H.M. ought to demand a *quid pro quo* from Caprivi, and" (here Holstein baited his hook) " send someone he can trust to Munich. So please get some shifting done—Rantzau to Stockholm, Busch to Stuttgart. You could tell Rantzau that, if he likes, he might be held at disposition for Brussels, The Hague, or Madrid."

To this Eulenburg made a marginal note : " I

should not *dream* of putting out a finger against Rantzau." There follow more suggestions of the same kind, likewise commented on by Eulenburg : " All very fine, but I'll take good care not to put my finger in the personal pie." In the midst of it all Holstein brought up a totally different question : " You might suggest to H.M. that he . . . should show a special mark of favour to Koch. It will gain H.M. a great deal of approbation, and give that conceited Birchov, that bull in the scientific china-shop, a nasty slap in the face." [1]

An incident of October, 1891, will give a particularly good idea of Eulenburg's influence upon the Emperor. Tsar Alexander III wished for the second time to return from Copenhagen by Germany without alighting at Berlin, although he had owed the German Emperor a return visit for more than a year. The latter had taken it into his head to meet the Tsar on his way through at Dantzig. He promised himself great results from this. In the Foreign Office the case was, with good reason, regarded in the opposite light, and they were very unhappy there about the Imperial notion. So now, as ever, Eulenburg was called in. As it happened, he was on leave at Liebenberg. Holstein wrote to him on October 18 :

> " Yesterday evening the Emperor told the Chancellor that he intended to go to Dantzig, to meet the Russian Royalties on the return journey. I very much deplore this for the sake of the Emperor's prestige abroad, since a false motive—fear—will be ascribed to him in Russia as well as in France. He himself believes that

[1] Robert Koch had just then promulgated his discovery of the serum treatment for tuberculosis, which created an immense sensation, but also before long no little uneasiness, as it became gradually evident that the matter was far from being ripe for experiment.

this step on his part will have a very tranquillising effect on all sides. But there are quite other means of producing that effect. The proposed step will do less to tranquillise than to give our enemies swelled heads. Only in the event of the Tsar's offering a really satisfactory excuse in apology for his neglect to visit Berlin—and an excuse which can be given publicity—might the meeting be considered. Otherwise it will injure the Emperor in the public opinion of every country.

" Perhaps it is not practicable for you to write to H.M. ; but consider whether you could not manage, under some pretext or other, to see him within the next few days. The transit will take place on the 27th or 29th, so these few days will decide the question.

" The reason why I feel it my duty to inform you in good time is that this directly concerns the personal prestige of your Imperial friend. That prestige is not in any case increasing—on the contrary. The nation does not take him seriously, and yet his personal prestige is the very thing he most needs for the future ! "

Eulenburg thought the matter important enough to mention in his very next letter, which for other reasons—a visit to Liebenberg for shooting—he had to write to the Emperor on October 20 :

" The newspaper announcement of the Tsar's impending passage through Germany at the end of the month reminds me of a casual welcome once given by Your Majesty to the Emperor, and the publicity heaped upon it by the Press. . . . All Germany felt relieved when the *Reichsanzeiger* then published a *démenti*. Should the Tsar now perpetrate the great discourtesy of again passing

through Germany without visiting Your Majesty, it would serve to fill in the picture which, since the Kronstadt incidents, the German subject now has of our relations with Russia ; but it would also make *every* German feel outraged by the discourtesy shown to Your Majesty. In such matters Germany is still too loyal to the Crown for anything else to be conceivable. Any politeness shown by Your Majesty to the Tsar in such a contingency would be regarded *in Russia* as nothing but ' running after him,' or else as fear and weakness—[while its omission] would certainly not be taken as discourteous, for the Russians know only too well that the Tsar still owes Your Majesty a visit."

Holstein, to whom these remarks were communicated—for it was Eulenburg's general principle always to keep the Foreign Office *au courant* of his political correspondence with the Emperor —answered the same day :

" Your letter of to-day, which shows me once more that you place the great cause above your personal amenities, gives me some hope that with your help we may still restrain the Emperor—without it, we shall not. The Chancellor on Saturday, Marschall yesterday evening, said all that they could say, but without persuading H.M., who entrenched himself in the argument : ' We must be polite even if people are impolite to us. Public opinion must be shown that we are neglecting nothing we can do.' "

Holstein wrote twice more, and Kiderlen once, about the affair. Eulenburg, too, seems to have taken some special step with the Emperor, which somehow had the effect of making him, though

reluctantly, give up the idea of meeting the Tsar. At any rate Holstein wrote on October 21 :

> " Bravo ! And many thanks from me and Marschall. No one else knows anything about your communication. I cherish a hope that at last *something* has been effective. . . . ! "

It was indeed effective. On October 31 the Tsar passed through Dantzig, and no one from the German Court put in an appearance, only the chief officials of the place being present.

Eulenburg's method of influencing the Emperor was usually that of correspondence, which in truth, as time went on, became more and more of a one-sided affair. The Emperor was too indolent to answer, and so his letters grew rarer and finally ceased almost entirely. However, there were several opportunities every year for verbal discussions of past events. The routine was henceforth that Eulenburg should accompany the Emperor on his shooting visit at Prökelwitz in May, and Rominten in the autumn, and above all should take part in the Norwegian cruise in July. His function on these occasions was always to represent the Foreign Office. Needless to point out that in consequence these " periods of repose " and " pleasure-trips " were for him periods of redoubled labour. The big public had, of course, no conception of this, which did not prevent it from passing sublimely contemptuous judgment on him. For the public Count Eulenburg was nothing but the man of social talents whom the Emperor took with him on his trips for their mutual enjoyment. Gradually there developed the inevitable professional jealousy—the Minister and Ambassador was reproached with frequent absence from his post, and it was maintained that Eulenburg was

one of the aristocratic idlers who enjoy a high salary and all the amenities of a dazzling position without troubling themselves about the serious duties of the daily round. He had to submit to being stamped as the archetype of the courtier—he, to whom Court life was in the long run so unendurable that before the Emperor had succeeded to the throne he had urgently begged him never to bestow upon *him* the favour of a position at Court. We can enter into the bitterness of his spirit when in later years, looking back upon these experiences, he once declared that he, an ardent sportsman, "*never once* discharged a gun during the many Imperial visits at Rominten, Hubertusstock, or Prökelwitz. While the Emperor was in the butts, and while on the Norwegian cruises he and the other guests were resting, I had always to sit in high boots and the Imperial shooting-dress, or else in yachting clothes, at my table—working in the sweat of my brow till far into the night. But the German fatherland heaped ignominy upon me because I was not at my post, and preferred to amuse myself by trips with the Emperor, and wire-pulling."

Nor were these perpetual meetings and continuous correspondence with the Emperor sufficient. It happened not seldom that Eulenburg would be quite irregularly called upon to rush off at all possible speed to the Emperor and "show him reason," as he and he alone could do or was permitted to do. Numerous were the letters and telegrams which battered at his doors with this demand. It is all the more necessary to say that he never, of his own accord, sought to approach the Emperor with any sort of political purpose, while it often happened that he refused to obey Holstein's appeals for help, and when he did acquiesce,

would always set off with a certain reluctance. How this sort of thing would develop, and what was expected of the Ambassador in Munich, may be displayed by an incident which has a slight element of comedy about it. It was in May, 1893, and the Emperor was as usual at Prökelwitz, shooting the deer. Eulenburg in the early part of the year had had a severe attack of influenza, which left its mark in torturing chronic headaches. So he had begged to be dispensed from attendance in East Prussia. Kiderlen had gone in his place as representative of the Foreign Office. For the sequel we turn to Eulenburg's diary, merely reminding the reader that the country was then in the throes of a hotly-contested general election. On June 15 a new Reichstag was to be elected, the House having been dissolved on May 5 on the rejection of the Army Estimates.

"*May* 23–29, 1893.

"Kiderlen's presence, with his ultra-Prussian ways and manners, in the close intimacy of the isolated Prökelwitz circle, had not only given the Dohna hosts, but finally the Emperor as well, an attack of nerves—the Emperor finding the caustic Suabian's style uncongenial in that Old Prussian environment. I had had ominous letters, with such appeals for help that all of a sudden I made up my mind to undertake the tedious journey and leap into the breach, were it only for a few days. For Kiderlen had been sent, with 'urgent orders,' to Berlin by the Emperor, and it would not have done to leave H.M. without any responsible political guidance in the immediate situation, full as it was of tension in many respects. I bit my iron, and on May 26 went straight from Berchtesgaden to Prökelwitz, stopping a few hours in Berlin and Liebenberg. In a great hurry

everywhere, and a terrible lot of work. Likewise at Prökelwitz, where I was welcomed with vociferous acclamations and universal amazement on May 29. The headaches had been within the bounds of endurance, but their effect was so visibly depressing that I had no difficulty in obtaining the Imperial consent to a few days' leave at Gastein.

"*May* 31, 1893.

"After two very arduous days the Emperor's departure for Dantzig takes place to-day, there to inspect and dine with his Hussars. I am glad to be able to see the fine old town thoroughly in the company of my good friend Eberhard Dohna, and dine with him comfortably in the hotel.

"*June* 1–6, 1893.

"I met the Emperor early on June 1 at Berlin, and then went on immediately to Liebenberg, where there was much to do. In the evening to Berlin. There I spoke to the Chancellor and the gentlemen of the Foreign Office, and left that night for Munich. On June 2 I got through all sorts of official work, had a long and by no means enlivening talk with the Nuncio, and went, suffering frightfully from headache, with my mother . . . to Gastein."

Such special tours usually occurred once or twice every year, and though fortunately they did not always coincide with illness, they never failed to mean exacting claims of a peculiar kind upon him.

The acme of this kind of thing was perhaps the sojourn of the Imperial couple in the spring of 1894 at Abbazia, where the Emperor Francis Joseph also stayed for a short time. Eulenburg,

who had just been appointed Ambassador in Vienna but had not yet taken over, as usual performed the duties of Foreign Office representative, and accompanied the Emperor to Venice for his meeting with the King of Italy. Of the strain of this period even the very detailed and humorously written diary gives only an approximate idea. Yachting, gondola parties, inspections of ships, receptions and banquets alternated with hours of tennis playing, and in the brief intervals documents of all kinds had to be prepared. Just then it happened that several big events were hovering on the horizon. There were negotiations with England about the renewal of the Triplice ; at the Vatican there was a desire for an understanding with the Italian Kingdom, to be obtained through the good offices of the German Emperor. Amid all this the Royal meeting at Venice had to be arranged for ; and the whole time the deserted Government in Berlin had to be soothed and kept in good temper. For the Reichstag had assembled, Lucanus was demanding Imperial signatures, and the *Kladderadatsch* campaign against Holstein and Company was raging more fiercely than ever. Unfortunately, too, Eulenburg's quarters were in a house on a peculiarly high hill, about five minutes' distance from the Imperial villa, which added a difficulty to his intercourse with the Emperor.

" Every moment," he writes, " come despatches which I have to attend to up here, and then I must go to the Emperor and change my clothes betweenwhiles. In the morning a lounge suit ; for lunch, frock coat ; if we are yachting, yachting dress ; if playing tennis, tennis dress ; for dinner, evening dress and a black tie. It is often such a rush that I dictate the most important despatches while I'm washing my hands. So it means keeping one's

head!" The trip to Venice was something of a relief—on the way much work could be done. "In Abbazia, of course, I never have a moment; I am like a wretched beetle that has fallen into an ant-hill. God help him!" After the return: "Yesterday I found a positively phenomenal pile of work awaiting me. But how could I do it—I had to report, and gallop through some business with the Emperor, which had to be carefully considered in the full swing of my career; and then the eternal eating, tennis-playing, the 'Christabel'" (this was the yacht which the Emperor had hired in England for the occasion), "and so on. Then of course I had to dictate despatches while I washed and dressed, and they must have most confoundedly corresponded to the circumstances! To-day the Emperor had the blessed idea of steaming in the 'Christabel' to the Chersonese—*en famille*. . . . So at any rate I had some peaceful hours in my cabin for work and the settling of all sorts of more or less terrific crises, in which the Wilhelmstrasse never fails me, and particularly just now."

At last the end drew near, on April 12. "In the evening a grand departure in the Imperial special train from Mataglia for Vienna. The day was appalling! Work, good-byes from countless people, who *all* wanted something. Nearly everyone thinks he ought to be decorated. I didn't know whether I was standing on my head or my heels—and the Exalted Family! Just as if they weren't going away at all. The same old round—tennis and so on; they're to be envied. Not even a handbag to pack, and never a ticket to take—demi-gods! Unfortunately not quite gods."

The reader has a right to know the kind of influence which Eulenburg tried to exercise. A few

examples will suffice. In general it may be said that until the end of the 'nineties there was scarcely an important occasion at home or abroad in which he was not in some way concerned, and frequently his intervention, or his silent influence, was decisive. In the late autumn of 1892 the necessity arose of replacing the once very shrewd and capable, but now not entirely satisfactory, General von Schweinitz as Ambassador in Petersburg. The Tsar desired General von Werder, who had formerly been Military Attaché for many years under Alexander II, and was very popular at the Russian Court. But the Emperor had decided on another candidate and would not hear of Werder, whom he considered unrepresentative. Eulenburg, during the Imperial shoot at Wasterhausen, attempted to change his purpose, but was sharply rebuked. By Holstein's advice he then made use of his friendly relations with the Russian Ambassador in Munich, to persuade the latter to obtain the Tsar's formal request for Werder's appointment. This was done, and even the Emperor could no longer persist in his refusal. It was more than a question of personal popularity. At that time the Wilhelmstrasse urgently desired a *rapprochement* with Russia, and the Tsar, too, was more favourably inclined. Much therefore depended on the personality of the new Ambassador. Eulenburg thus described General von Werder :

> "Werder, who was a great friend of my parents and whom I know through and through, is a charming drawing-room General, good-looking and good-hearted. A man one cannot help liking ; and he was an intimate friend of Alexander II, whose secret marriage with Princess Dolgorouki, when she was Princess

Jurjewski, he arranged. He was equally beloved by Alexander III, and it would have been *senseless* not to propitiate this savage-tempered Tsar, who hates Germany and especially William II, by appointing Werder. What we want now is a clever Councillor of Embassy."

In fact this appointment was the beginning of a close *rapprochement* between Germany and Russia, which was to manifest itself in the East Asian complications in 1894. It showed the position that Eulenburg had acquired when Holstein confided to him, in a long private letter, the German attitude towards this change of front on Russia's part.

"Berlin, *January* 29, 1893.

"When Werder took leave, I said to him in the presence of Kiderlen and Pourtalès: 'We want a good understanding with Russia, but *without committing political adultery*. Existing treaties, in all their length and breadth, must be adhered to. But to go beyond serves no purpose.' Werder seems to have gone to Petersburg at the right moment. The *Times* correspondent in this place, who spent a short time there, reported to-day—*against* English interests—that in Petersburg great importance was attached to the recently perceptible *volte-face* in the Tsar's attitude towards a *rapprochement* with Germany. The Tsarevitch declared here[1] that his father was certainly less 'western' than he himself was; nevertheless even his father was of opinion that in case the French Republic let loose a war of aggression, for instance under a military dictator, the old monarchies must coalesce as at the

[1] The Tsarevitch, later Tsar Nicholas II, was in Berlin from January 24 to 28.

beginning of the century. You want to know what I think of it all? Well, I believe that the Russian tempest raised by Bismarckian influences had reached its climax at Kronstadt" (on the visit of the French squadron at the end of July, 1891). "Kiel" (the Emperor's meeting with the Tsar on June 7, 1892) "was the turn of the tide. I question if to-day the Tsar would stand during the playing of the Marseillaise.

"The renewal of the Triplice" (on May 6, 1891) "was essential, because thereby we gained time to wait quietly for the turn of the tide.[1] Whether a second renewal would be useful, I—poor blind mole!—am in no longer a position to judge: but *you* are.

"We must keep Austria on its feet as long as we can, with or without a treaty. That it was not yesterday that I began to uphold this programme, you can see from the fact that I was for Kiel and—the first to be so—for Werder."

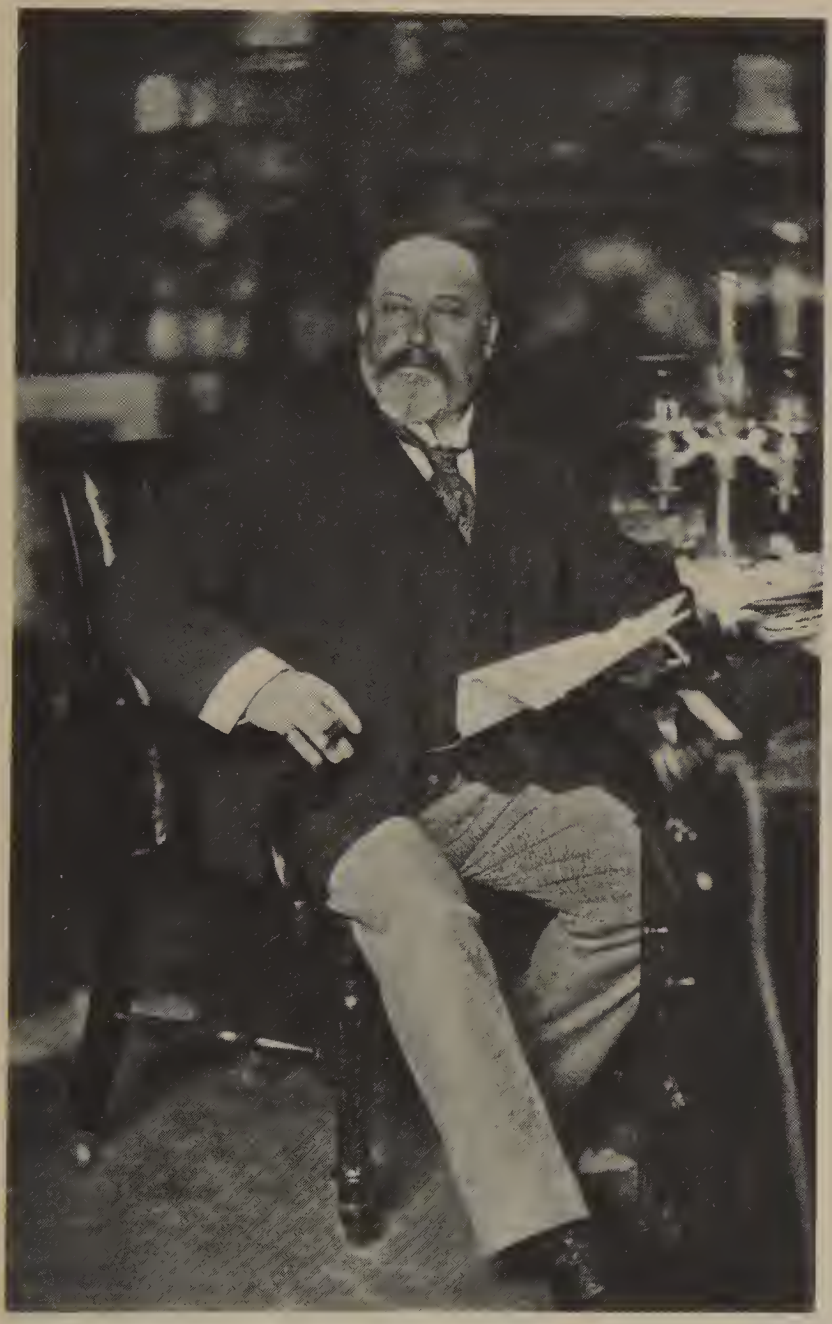
An analagous case occurred a year later in Rome. There Count Solms had given such plain proofs of incompetence that his transfer could no longer be avoided. The indicated successor was Bernard Bülow, then Minister at Bucharest, who apart from his abilities was by family connections the very man for Rome. There was an obstacle in the fact that, besides others, the Military Plenipotentiary at the Roman Embassy, von Engelbrecht, had his eye on the post and was preferred by the Emperor, though he was not really suitable. Hence it needed great tact and prudence to obtain the rightful candidate's appointment against all opposition and

[1] Holstein misses the point. The open *rapprochement* between Russia and France was caused by the renewal of the Triplice, behind which more was suspected—namely, the formal entrance of England to that Alliance.

ill-feeling. To whom the credit was owing, when the Emperor finally acquiesced in Bülow's nomination, a letter from Holstein of December, 1893, leaves no doubt : "Again you have been foremost in this business. The Chancellor guesses it too. When he told me yesterday of the course of events, he said, 'Eulenburg will have had a hand in this !' I said nothing, for I thought it as well not to let him know how you had prepared the ground. We must not deprive him of the little self-confidence he has. Marschall knows nothing either."

How beneficial Eulenburg's presence was to the Emperor in sudden emergencies is best shown by an incident during the Cowes Week at the end of July, 1893. Eulenburg had accompanied the Emperor there (the usual Norwegian cruise having been cut short, because the Reichstag was in July to debate the Army Estimates, which, as is well known, were passed by only eleven votes). During a dinner given by the Prince of Wales on July 30 there unexpectedly arrived the Queen's Secretary, Sir Arthur Ponsonby, with the news, which fell like a thunderbolt among the company, that France was apparently threatening war with England ! Eulenburg's diary continues :

> "The Emperor, immediately after our return to the 'Hohenzollern,' took me into his cabin and completely broke down. I really have never seen him so overcome, and I had to bring the whole force of my mind to bear upon finding reasonable arguments which would soothe him. It was the second big shock—after the visit of the French fleet to Kronstadt in 1891—which has occurred in consequence of the non-renewal of the Secret Treaty with Russia.
>
> "The proceedings of the French in Siam, the



EDWARD VII AS PRINCE OF WALES

attack on the Mekong Coast, the presentation of the ultimatum to Siam can only mean that France desires to extend her sphere of influence in Further India, and of course with the support of Russia, who is threatening Northern India, while it seems from this that the South is to be threatened as well.[1]

" The Emperor exclaimed that England's fleet was weaker than the Russian and French fleets in combination. Even with the aid of our little fleet England would still be the weaker. The French (he said) wanted to drive Russia to some action—which, considering the Tsar's hostile attitude towards us, they might succeed in doing. Our army was not strong enough to fight simultaneously against France and Russia. The French had chosen their moment very cleverly. It was impossible to sit still and let the tempest break on our heads. All Germany's prestige was gone, if we could not take a prominent part ; and not to be a world-power was to cut a deplorable figure. What were we to do ? . . . I said that Hatzfeldt's " (the German Ambassador in London) " illness at such a moment was bad luck, since we could not consult with him ; but nevertheless there was no reason for despair. Especially as I had been in a position to observe the effect of the threatening news upon very important personages, such as the Prince of

[1] On July 13 French battleships had sailed up the Menam and threatened the capital, Bangkok. Shots had been exchanged. On July 20, France had issued a 48-hour ultimatum, demanding the evacuation of the left bank of the Mekong and a three million francs indemnity ; and soon afterwards had blockaded the Siam coastline. On the other hand, Under-Secretary Grey had, on July 17, replied to a question in the Lower House that : The independence and integrity of Siam was a question of grave importance for the British, and still more for the Indo-British Empire, and that the Government was fully alive to its responsibilities.

Wales. And not less upon Ponsonby, who had looked positively overwhelmed—to say nothing of all the others. Hence I was of opinion that England would not fight, but temporise. In the first instance we should be mere lookers-on, and with any luck we ought not to come off too badly in a war conducted by other Powers. Above all the Emperor must not allow himself to be drawn into any binding engagements, but listen as silently and good-humouredly as might be to the Englishmen's remarks. For the rest, might I now venture to call in Kiderlen and Metternich? I did not doubt that they, before I spoke to them, would prove to be of my opinion.

"This was done. Kiderlen sang to the same tune as I did; and Metternich, more English than any of the English with whom I talked to-day, distinguished himself by complete silence, as well as by the most 'portentous' countenance that he could command for the occasion.

"When they went out the Emperor seemed calmer, but he looked very wretched—pale, and biting his lips nervously. I felt dreadfully sorry for him. He, coming here with his big talk about our ships, felt driven into a corner as it were, and politically put in his place. And to be put in one's place is always a bitter pill for one's poor dear vanity.

"There was an epilogue next day. The Emperor would not let anyone else take charge of the race with the Prince of Wales's yacht. He devoted himself exclusively to the steering and management of his craft, and left conversation with his uncle entirely to his friends. The Emperor stayed on deck the whole time, and as Wales went on breakfasting steadily from ten till four, I had to sit tête-à-tête with him for hours

on end. I learnt to know him thoroughly—a capable, amiable, but very crafty man, with a remarkably sinister look in his eyes—*not* our friend. Policy played a large part in our conversation. The excitement about the threatened danger with France had not died down. Thank God, there was a letter from Rosebery when we arrived at Cowes, which relieved the tension.[1] The Emperor seemed so absorbed in the race that he had forgotten the political sensation of the night before as though it had never been. But with the Prince it was not so—not by any means. On the contrary. We had a very serious talk about it. As soon as we found ourselves, after the superficial conversation of yesterday, suddenly tête-à-tête on the 'Britannia,' and, moreover, with the certain prospect of being thrown on one another's society for the best part of a long day in a confined space, there began a kind of tentative diplomatic 'conversation' between us. Policy, personalities—both were touched on. I was cautious, but '*causant*'; the Prince likewise. Then he seemed to acquire more confidence, perhaps from a certain wish to be at his ease. In this way the Siam question came to be seriously discussed. The Prince thought France's proceedings 'rather audacious,' but of course attributed the instigation to Russia, 'which is explicable by the antipathy of the Tsar to my nephew Willy.' (I daresay, too, he did not like to lay the blame on his dearly-beloved France.) He said that it clearly pointed, first of all, to a firm coalition between France and Russia. England could well afford to temporise. If they were

[1] England sang small, suffering Siam to acquiesce in the demanded evacuation and the disarming of the frontier territory, whereby Siam became dependent on France.

obliged to use force against France, they would probably—would they not?—have Germany on their side. I answered that certainly England might then be in a position to settle matters with France and play the looker-on. The Prince laughed at this rejoinder, and passed on to Colonial policy. I could very well see that he was amused at the way I had divined his thoughts. He got quite communicative, and even said in the course of conversation that he did not wholly understand his nephew's 'Colonial game.' He could imagine that anybody who had no diamonds would like to buy them. But if one was not in a position to buy big ones, it was more practical to give up a hopeless game.

"Then our fleet was mentioned. 'It is all very well for my nephew to be interested in ships. But when one sees him with his disabled arm, going on as he now is doing on deck, one can't help being a little afraid he may do himself some damage.'"

"This remark was no less subtle than malicious, and his look was more malicious still. I confined myself to answering that it was surprising what a good horseman the Emperor was, in spite of his bad balance, and how he would take any obstacle without turning a hair. As the fat, unwieldy Prince is by no means at his best on horseback, my retort made its effect, and all the more because he cannot have been sure whether I knew of his disability.

"However, we got off that subject easily enough—it was dangerously near not only to the Prince's deep animosity against his nephew but also to the German ship-building, which surely ought not to disturb the mighty Albion, particularly since the non-renewal of the Secret Treaty

with Russia. For the present it might indeed conceivably be reckoned by England among favourable circumstances, for the orientation of Germany, according to the Bismarckian policy, is *apparently* in a westerly direction—that is to say towards England. Anyhow I was glad to think that Hatzfeldt is Ambassador in London, for his masterly political intelligence will certainly be able to find the right path in these vicissitous times.

"So I was all the more startled when soon afterwards the Prince spoke quite openly against Hatzfeldt. 'One never sees him, he buries himself in his domestic circle—there's no possibility of ever talking to him about policy. He is in touch neither with the Court nor with society; and it is, I assure you, often necessary to exchange views with the German Ambassador in an emergency.' This attack was to me extremely disconcerting. On the one hand I did not know whether Hatzfeldt might not be too clever for the Prince, and on the other I should have to discuss it at home, for the Prince is at any rate a political force, and certainly a social one too. I answered evasively that to be sure Hatzfeldt was a sick man, but he was too deserving to be sacrificed. I said I would mention the matter at home, but could not spoil the Emperor's present stay by this disturbing communication, and so on.[1] Of course I did tell the Emperor the very next day, and begged him urgently not to think of moving Hatzfeldt so long as the latter was still capable of performing his official duties, whether from his sofa or his bed."

[1] "It was not till afterwards that I learnt from the Emperor the real reason for the Prince's attack. The entire Royal family had begged him to send me as Ambassador to London! Very flattering, but very unwelcome."—P. E.

The principal item in the inventory of Bismarck's legacies to the new Government was an extensive reinforcement of the army, and its re-organisation. So long ago as 1889–90 this had been prominent in his counsels, but his retirement had postponed the question. But the longer the delay the greater the urgency, in view of the constantly progressive measures in Russia and France. The Emperor was possessed by the idea of basing the increase on the old principle of a three-years' service. It seemed to him a matter of conscience not to undo the life-work of his grandfather, and he was ready to face the anticipated conflict with the Reichstag.

Caprivi was of a different opinion. He had very early made up his mind to propose limitation of service to two years, in order to enfeeble the opposition in the Reichstag. The very first stage of the discussion had thus led to a secret crisis. On June 16, 1891, the Chancellor had asked to be relieved of his office, for he held that though a conflict with the Prussian Landtag might be got over, one with the Reichstag would be the downfall of the Empire. The Emperor at once yielded, declared himself in agreement, but stuck to his own opinion.

During the Norwegian cruise he recurred to the matter with Eulenburg. In two long conversations he made it clear that he was firmly resolved to put through the reinforcement of the army on a three-years' basis, even at the risk of a conflict with the Reichstag. In vain did Eulenburg reiterate that this was feasible only with the full concurrence of the Imperial Chancellor and the Federal Princes. The Emperor insisted that Caprivi would have to put up with it—could not leave him in the lurch. "The office of Imperial Chancellor cannot be bandied about, like some military command or other. It stands too high." If the worst came to

the worst, he would carry the reinforcement through in Prussia alone with the Landtag, then the other States would soon follow suit. He was deaf to all objections, so that Eulenburg could do no more than confidentially inform the Chancellor of what he had heard and said.

After long and occasionally acrimonious negotiations between the political and military departments, the Emperor was at last, in the autumn of 1892, induced to withdraw his resistance. In November the draft of a Bill was laid before the Reichstag ; it proposed that the two-years' service should be at first a provisional measure for the defence of the country. Eulenburg had a large share in this decision. They knew in the Wilhelmstrasse that here, too, they could not do without him. Holstein wrote of it to Kiderlen : "Don't you think it might be useful for Eulenburg, after he has come to an understanding with you, to express his views quite frankly to the Chancellor ? The Chancellor knows, being a sensible man, that—especially on account of Rominten—he must reckon with Eulenburg. We can't help their having different opinions ; but it seems to me right that *anyhow* the Chancellor should know *beforehand* how far he can count upon Eulenburg."

The reason for this precaution was that Eulenburg was personally in favour of the three-years' service —and for that matter always remained so—not on military grounds, where he pretended to no special knowledge, but from the standpoint of national discipline. But because this was first of all a purely military question, he suppressed his personal opinion and supported the Chancellor to the best of his power. The die was cast during an Imperial sojourn at Rominten in September, 1892, and there can be little doubt that the memorandum which

Eulenburg then laid before the Emperor (it was the fruit of his "pleasure trip!") was of decisive influence on the result.

"The present political and parliamentary situation at home is still affected by the Education Bill of the past session in the Landtag. The introduction of that measure had this advantage—that its withdrawal was of service to Your Majesty in *Liberal* Germany. Otherwise its effect was merely *pernicious*. In the first place it seriously impaired the hardly-won authority of the Imperial Chancellor both in the country and the Reichstag; in the second it awakened suspicion as to the relations between Your Majesty and him; in the third—and this is really the most important, because it affected the prestige of the Monarchy—the Press regarded the withdrawal of the measure as a success for itself. "The now projected Army Measure is of almost greater general interest than the Education Bill. Therefore it must be able to count on success in the Reichstag—alternatively, it *must be carried out* even in spite of the Reichstag; or else it *must not be brought in at all*. A withdrawal of the measure after the incident of the Education Bill is *out of the question*—that is to say, if it proved to be another instance of giving-in, it would seriously injure Your Majesty and the Government in public opinion. An administration of Your Majesty's which was not in a position to carry an increase of the forces, regarded by it as essential, would to foreign countries appear so feeble, and to the nation (which has lost the sense of its national duties) so divided, that the moment for attack might be thought to have come. . . .

"The measure, as it now stands, represents a

compromise between Your Majesty and the Imperial Chancellor. That compromise will be the subject of discussion, directly any difficulties arise about the voting on the Bill. The Chancellor will then revert to the two-years' service, or will make concessions to the Centre.

"Your Majesty has declared *against both*. . . . The anxiety felt concerning such difficulties in the Reichstag is justified on the following grounds: On the one hand the Parties are aware of the Chancellor's general tendency to yield to pressure, and especially of his liking for the two-years' compulsory service; on the other, the reported conclusion—to which no *démenti* has been given—of Your Majesty's speech after the Berlin review of the Forces, when Your Majesty said you preferred a small but well-trained army with three-years' service to a huge force with two, has given the impression that Your Majesty sets no value on the reinforcement, that the three-years' service with the army as at present constituted is Your Majesty's only desire.

"If Your Majesty authorised the Imperial Chancellor and his Prime Minister to say that the 'small, well-trained army' with a three-years' service was only a *pis-aller*, and that the new measure represents what *alone* Your Majesty values, it would put an end to the dangerous myth which keeps the right-thinking elements inactive. There should not be left *the slightest room for doubt* that Your Majesty is decidedly in favour of the Bill, otherwise there will be a full-dress debate, and the conflict with the Imperial Chancellor will be inevitable.

"It is also indispensable that the measure, if it does not find acceptance in the desired form, should nevertheless be carried. This is so irre-

fragably a matter of necessity that the idea of a concession or dissolution—and another dissolution after that—must be regarded as entirely outside the question. The Reichstag must not have *any doubt whatever* of the Government's being in very sober earnest. The thought of a withdrawal of the measure is, however, excluded by the reasons already stated. There is *no* conceivable form for it to take.

"If Your Majesty should have any idea of laying the responsibility for their unpatriotic proceedings on the Reichstag, that would be nothing but the official recognition of the supreme power of that body—*i.e.*, the most serious of all injuries to the Monarchy, and for foreign countries a proof of weakness which could be cancelled only by a victorious war.

"To summarise this exposition in a few words: Your Majesty can but identify yourself with the measure, and so destroy all doubts. The Imperial Chancellor and the Ministry are, by command, entrusted with the carrying of the measure *à tout prix;* should there be any idea of concession, it would be possible to come to an understanding with the Chancellor at the critical moment, and not before. By such procedure Your Majesty would avoid any sort of traffic with Party men or leaders, thus precluding all talebearing and annoyance to the Imperial Chancellor. Thus alone is defeat with its incalculable consequences to be avoided.

"PHILIP EULENBURG."

The introduction of the Bill was the first step into the danger-zone. During the whole of the further proceedings Caprivi's administration stood between Scylla and Charybdis. While on the one

side the contumacy of parties in the Reichstag threatened to bring about a parliamentary defeat, on the other the Emperor's impatience waxed with every proof of the Opposition's tenacity. The Sovereign, influenced by his military surroundings, was only too inclined to accept the challenge of the Reichstag, if not even to force it. And always there was the menacing possibility that the difference of opinion between Emperor and Chancellor, known to hostile circles and calculated upon by opponents, would again be made manifest. Eulenburg, to avert this danger and keep the Emperor as far as might be on Caprivi's side, again took a part, and wrote to the Emperor :

" Munich, *December* 29, 1892.

" I venture most respectfully to draw Your Majesty's attention to an occasion which cannot fail to have a decisive influence upon the fate of the Army Bill. This is the speech which Your Majesty is about to make on New Year's Day to the assembled Generals-Commanding. It excites universal apprehension, and a remark which the Nuncio made to me yesterday has caused me to address Your Majesty on the subject. After I had reduced the exalted clerical gentleman to a dithering condition by my picture of the consequences attendant on a rejection of the Bill (on which matter I am sending an official report), and he, shaking in his shoes, had promised me to use his personal influence (despite the unfriendly attitude of Rome), he said : ' People are eagerly looking forward to the Emperor's New Year speech.' In other words—the *acquiescent* members of the Centre are hoping thereby to acquire a vote-winning watch-word. Indubitably it has been contrived to create uneasiness in army

circles regarding the timeliness of the measure, and the absolute identity of Your Majesty's wishes with the Caprivi proposal ; and from these military circles such poison is cast abroad as would make short work of lay opinion.

" If Your Majesty would say to the Generals-Commanding that Your Majesty hoped they would make a point of enlightening their subordinates as to the meaning and extent of the measures which Your Majesty's Government had proposed for the promotion of the army's efficiency ; and if Your Majesty would perhaps express a hope that when you meet the Generals a year hence in this place, you will be able to take note of the practical working of the new organisation which had been from this date approved by the Reichstag—then these various myths would be dissipated. Should Your Majesty wish to go further, you might allude to a plan of reorganisation ' which my Government at my command has laid before the Reichstag, after mature consideration, for the reinforcement of my army to a state of preponderant strength.' Expressions of this kind may have a decisive effect on the fate of the Bill.

" But the Bill may be *defeated*, if these gentlemen cherish the slightest doubt of Your Majesty's complete identification with the Imperial Chancellor's declared standpoint."

Holstein reported the effect of this on January 1 :

" The letter to H.M. has worked—indeed, worked almost too well. He spoke, as the Imperial Chancellor informs me, to the Generals of ' sweeping the Reichstag.' The Chancellor did not altogether like it, for his hand is not quite so strong as all that. I gave the *Kölnische*

Zeitung a brief paragraph, cooked to a turn. It is to be hoped the enemy side won't make it their business to give publicity to this blunder. Anyhow your letter to H.M. was quite excellent."

It was Eulenburg first and foremost who managed to talk the Emperor out of his belligerent attitude, and persuade him to a compromise, failing which the Bill would never have passed the Reichstag. His first opportunity occurred when the Emperor summoned him to a meeting in Karlsruhe. He reported this to the Imperial Chancellor on January 15 :

" I venture *quite* confidentially to inform Your Excellency of a conversation I have had with H.M. about the Army Bill. From this it emerged that H.M. has given more thought to the possible conflict than I could have wished just now. The Emperor referred to certain counsels which Prince Bismarck gave him on his accession. H.M. said that he had met all parties in a friendly spirit, that by the extension of social legislation he had shown his sincere desire to help things on, and that all the thanks he got was curt rejection, enmity, and intentional misunderstanding. Therefore the conflict was a certainty of the future, and it might be advantageous to accept it without delay. The King of Saxony, he said, quite agreed with him.

" I replied to H.M. that the poison of Bismarckian intrigue had *weakened* his position, and so it was better to postpone the issue of a great internal conflict on a social question until after Prince Bismarck's death, for a Government must go into battle as powerful as it can possibly be. I also said to H.M. that his envisagement of the conflict would mean an enfeeblement of the

immediately necessary vigour which was essential to carrying the measure. . At this moment we could think only of carrying it—*nothing more.* The Emperor replied that he intended to fight for that *with all his power.* . . .

" This reassures me, but how can I be certain that the idea of a conflict will not again be put into his head by someone or other? The Emperor is so extremely impulsive! The aides-de-camp who are now in H.M.'s suite will not be on *our* side. . . . I confess I don't know what can be done about that. But I felt bound to inform Your Excellency. . . ."

Holstein, who was told of this communication, commented : " Your letter is extremely sensible, and as clever as it can be. But will it suit the Chancellor's ideas . . . ? That makes it all the more necessary that you should write, for one isn't where one is *only* to do lip-service." Caprivi did, in fact, fail to understand the letter, for he read into it some fear of a dissolution of the Reichstag. On this point Eulenburg reassured him. . . . When in May the decisive day in the Reichstag drew near, it was considered indispensable that Eulenburg should be with the Emperor. He was urgently telegraphed for by Holstein, and of course came at once. There was a pretext in the reconstruction of the church at Liebenberg, which had recently been destroyed by lightning. He wrote to the Emperor on May 1 : " I shall be in Berlin on Thursday or Friday morning. My arrival coincides with the second reading of the Army Bill. I frankly confess that I arranged to go to Liebenberg just now on that very account. I have had too much to do with that affair not to be at least curious."

The heavy thundercloud which had brooded

over Germany since the March of 1890 was the openly hostile attitude of Prince Bismarck to the Emperor's Government. For everyone who upheld that Government the Bismarck *fronde* was a most important problem ; for the Emperor's personal friend and the Government's confidential instrument it must have been almost a question of life and death. Anxiety about Bismarck and what he might say or do runs like a scarlet thread through all the correspondence that Eulenburg had to carry on from 1890 onwards. It would not be conceivably possible to depict his attitude in detail here. That could be achieved only by giving a complete collection of his letters, which must be postponed to another opportunity. But in delineating him for posterity the broad outlines must be indicated, especially as in this matter (and of late under the mask of a veracious chronicle) things have been attributed to him which never entered his mind, and accusations made against him which are directly contrary to the truth—while what he really did has been hidden from men's eyes. The most important documents are therefore given here—those which represent his behaviour in this no less personal than political situation. The impartial reader will have no difficulty in perceiving that Eulenburg from the first went as straight as his character would answer beforehand for his doing, and followed the path which was best for Emperor and Empire—not to say the only right one.

For him it stood fast that the restoration of Bismarck to his former position was out of the question, because that would have meant the moral abdication of the Emperor as ruling monarch, and the destruction of the Royal idea, which nothing could replace. Likewise the position of a, so to speak, irresponsible counsellor of the Imperial Govern-

ment, which was demanded by many as Bismarck's natural right as founder of the Empire, Eulenburg considered to be impossible, because Bismarck would never have been satisfied with it, and no Imperial Chancellor except his own son would have acquiesced in anything of the kind. But no less firmly did he hold that the venomous personal feud which the old Prince was conducting against his successor, and therefore against the Emperor, was a national calamity, not to be effectually guarded against in any way. Hence he urgently desired to put an end to the open conflict by establishing at any rate an apparent reconciliation between William II and Bismarck. This he thought attainable, and he did not consider it would be too much for the Emperor (though after the scene on March 15, 1880, he could have exacted an apology from Bismarck) to take the first step towards peace. That was what Eulenburg worked for, and it was brought about. How great was his personal share in the result, let the documents show. Rightly to judge his mode of procedure we must remember that he stood between two fires. On the one side was the Emperor's military environment, which was more or less working for Bismarck ; on the other was the Foreign Office, where Holstein especially was already inclined to regard the slightest sign of a *rapprochement* as an alarm signal and the beginning of the end. Some idea of the behaviour which Bismarck permitted himself even immediately after his retirement—such as receiving newspaper reporters, especially from foreign and anti-German journals—may be gathered from a letter of Bülow's, after a chance meeting with Herbert Bismarck at Wildbad :

" I did not conceal from Herbert how extremely

regrettable I thought his father's interviews. I said that I could not understand how a man who for nearly half a century had upheld the Royal Standard, could now set himself in opposition to all his past, and give every loyal patriot cause for vexation. Herbert tried at first to account for his father's proceedings by the familiar argument of the Hamburg journal. When I insisted, he told me in confidence that he, too, deplored those interviews to the utmost degree. He had tried to dissuade his father, but the Prince was, as usual, not to be guided. His Excellency could not be idle, and so he read newspapers all day long, and this inspired the wish to influence the Press by receiving journalists. It was a pastime for him, Herbert said—a kind of sport. I induced Herbert to promise that he would do all he could to prevent any further receptions of journalists—and especially from foreign and opposition papers."

Eulenburg himself wrote to Holstein on the question on February 14, 1891—at a time when Caprivi had just, though cautiously and restrainedly, accepted the challenge by answering Bismarck's criticism of the Anglo-German Treaty concerning East Africa—the so-called Zanzibar Treaty—with a quotation from an official utterance of Bismarck's which sounded a very different note. On April 1, 1891, Eulenburg noted: "Prince Bismarck's birthday. For the first time, the Emperor sent no congratulations. I had written to Herbert, and received a cool acknowledgment by telegraph." But immediately afterwards he saw a chance of reconciliation. Prince Bismarck was standing for a vacant seat in the Reichstag; the election was imminent. And Eulenburg wrote to Holstein:

"What would you think—in case the Prince gets in—of the Emperor's offering him Bellevue Palace as an abode? If he refuses, he accentuates the rupture; if he accepts, he would be in a difficult position, as regards public opinion, if as the Emperor's guest he should make himself disagreeable. Caprivi's position would not be affected by such an offer—purely *ad hoc* as it would be. In South Germany, though, such a mark of friendship would have an excellent effect, and make up for the absence of congratulations on April 1."

Holstein's answer displays the extent of their divergence of view on this point: "The Emperor has now to show two things—moral courage and tenacity. . . . The offer of Bellevue would be represented as a sign of fear, and would make the opponents still more audacious."

A few days later Eulenburg had an opportunity of making his confession of faith in the Bismarck question to an old friend. He wrote on April 17 to Secretary of Legation (now *en disposition*), von Hirschfeld, a college friend, who was his neighbour at Starnberg. It was a few days after he took up his Munich post.

"I don't 'shudder' in the least at the thought of your visit to Friedrichsruh. I shall never forget what we all, and I as well, owe to the great man; and with my cordial relations on both sides I am in a dispassionate sort of position, which I only wish I could transmit to all parts of the German Empire! Whether I am regarded as I used to be at Friedrichsruh, I do not know. Recently I have been so much in the limelight, on account of the frequent changes in my official

position, that I can't help having an obscure feeling that this circumstance may have called forth criticisms less favourable than of old—but I may be mistaken.

"My objectivity of reverence and affection lays every utterance and action of both Parties—I wish to God we had not to speak of Parties!—quietly in the balance; and beholds with alarm the effects of misunderstood good counsels, and only too well understood bad ones, on public opinion in Germany. I am more mixed up with political life than I ever expected to be, and have opportunities of observation which do not fall to everyone's share. I am by no means hopeless, but I *am* alarmed and perplexed. Our present state is that of transition from Prussian ministerial centralisation to a decentralisation. At the same time we are in a phase of parliamentary reform which we never expected to see before the death of the German Jupiter, Bismarck, but which we are now experiencing, with the addition of a jar of mixed pickles from Friedrichsruh. It is curious that even international newspapers like the *Kölnische Zeitung* can't understand this, but keep plaintively whimpering for a 'steady course,' into which it is to be hoped we may steer after we have got over the difficulties of the transition period.

"Our Bismarck was too great for us to be able to start at once without convulsions on a new régime. When a *necessary* and painful operation is performed without chloroform, the big gash in the flesh, into which all kinds of bacilli have found their way, must have time to heal. But thank God the patient is strong and of sound constitution. A few southerly parts of the body, with which I am particularly concerned, are

a little affected. I think we may do something with field-grey ointment—but I deeply deplore the fact that you and I could not have one or two talks over the prescription."

In the autumn of this year it was Count Waldersee who gave him cause to expound his views. Waldersee, since February General-Commanding in Altona, seems to have felt the need of getting into closer touch with Bismarck, but was anxious to make sure how far he could with safety go. So he wrote to Eulenburg in October, when the latter was on the point of going to the usual Imperial shoot at Rominten :

" Your most friendly letter of the 25th gave me great pleasure. It showed me—what I never for a moment doubted—that you were unchanged towards me ; and I know, too, that this will always be so, for quite apart from our mutual liking, we are linked by a common effort—by the wish to serve our beloved Emperor loyally and to the best of our abilities. That he needs such people we are agreed, and perhaps more than ever now, though his full consciousness of that fact, and his gift for recognition of individual merit, are not at the moment at their most perceptible.

" The future begins to fill me with many kinds of anxieties ; but I tell myself for reassurance that I am not in a position to survey the whole field, and I still feel a fair measure of confidence in the fundamental good sense of the people. I believe the Almighty still looks favourably upon us. . . . His Majesty told me, on my departure for Altona, that one of my duties was to keep an eye on Prince Bismarck ; later I received private instructions to the effect that I might continue my

personal intercourse with him. I have had such intercourse to a certain extent, and informed H.M. of every such occasion ; it was not until afterwards that I heard the Chancellor had tried to make capital out of this fact—people have been infamous enough to say that I was conspiring with Bismarck ! Now the Prince is coming to Friedrichsruh again, and he will certainly try to see something of me. What ought I to do ? If I associate with him, my purpose will be to restrain him from follies and if possible pave the way to a reconciliation, which could not indeed be anything more than an ostensible one, but which I should even so consider a great blessing. Germany is sick of the present situation, believe me it is, dear Count ; anyone who can contribute to alter it will be doing Emperor and Empire a service. I am anxious to help, even if Caprivi should take it ill, but only if H.M. desires it. If our Sovereign has any objection, I will not have hand, act, or part in it, and should of course avoid any *intercourse whatever*. On this last point I should be glad of a lead, for to avoid intercourse without such reasons would look very bad. If you would rather have nothing to do with the matter, do not reply to this letter ; I shall not in any way resent it."

Eulenburg answered on November 30 :

" Forgive my delay in replying to your very kind letter, which came in the nick of time for Liebenberg. I have been overwhelmed with business. I had an opportunity of representing your wishes with regard to intercourse at Friedrichsruh, and they were given gracious attention —with a remark that before you left for Altona

the point had been discussed between H.M. and yourself. An exchange of courtesies will never call for the least displeasure, but I think that any use made in the newspapers of even the most harmless interview might produce a bad impression. But it will not be easy to discredit you if you really avoid talking *any* politics with Prince Bismarck when you visit him. I know from experience what tattle there is about anything and everything that concerns the Prince and his social intercourse, and how difficult it would be to keep the secret of any *really* political conversation that might take place. So, dear Count, my advice is that you should pay your visit, but say not a single word about politics if a coachman, a servant, to say nothing of a member of the family, is within earshot.

"I don't believe that a reconciliation with Prince Bismarck would be any good. As a human being I should most gladly welcome it, as I should any other reconciliation—but what political effect it might have I cannot say. The Emperor will not take the first step, neither will the Prince. Besides, there is no basis for any kind of understanding. I can answer for it that the Emperor would never leave Prince Bismarck standing on the platform at Friedrichsruh or anywhere else like a gendarme, but would cordially offer his hand. The Prince is afraid of that, and I wonder he does not know the Emperor better.

"As to the result of such a shake-hands, I am inclined to think it might be a tacit compromise—intimating that the present Government would sometimes listen to the Prince's advice if he *gives up* the *Hamburger Nachricht*. You will grant me that if the said advice were not followed, the Ham-

burg paper would immediately give tongue—and then the existing conditions would prevail still more strongly.

"It is all very hopeless and perplexing. I fear we are in for an extremely serious crisis before all classes of the people learn to understand the Emperor, and get accustomed to him. The long disuse of personal royal rule is partly to blame for the present misunderstandings. Between an absolute monarch and a constitutional one there is a wide distinction. After having, throughout the Bismarckian era, lost the sense of a Monarchy—that is to say, having felt it only in the *personality*, not of late in the actions, of the revered old Emperor—we find this Emperor (who assuredly has no absolutist designs !) altogether too energetic and resolute. That is the feeling which governs even Conservative people in our Liberal age.

"If the Emperor were to declare this very day 'I will say no word, will efface myself, will not be heard of at all'—even that would not set things right. Nor would a new Ministry or a new Chancellor. But Prince Bismarck, once the vociferous rejoicings on his return were over, would find himself in a very tight place, and would be exposed to violent disaffection.

"So, what *is* to happen? I ask myself in vain, and can only hope that people may come to see that we are in a *transition stage*, which will go on for years. The decentralisation of political activity after a long period of complete centralisation which annihilated all individuality is not to be accomplished so quickly as we, in our impatient modernity, desire. And, moreover, the Reichstag, the Landtag, need a long time for internal reconstruction of parties, which for many a day

were cut only to the measure of that mighty personality of Bismarck's.

"However, we must get *through* our *transitional* phase. Our beloved Emperor, to be sure, does not always make things easy for those who loyally uphold him—but there is no reason at all for losing heart, and anticipating nothing but a 'crash,' whether abroad or at home."

Before the year was over things took a new turn. Eulenburg's idea that Bismarck should be offered a royal palace as his abode appears to have reached the Emperor's ears from some other quarter and to have fallen on fruitful ground. Thence frantic agitation in the Wilhelmstrasse, panting through the following letter from Holstein :

"The intrigues about 'Bismarck's rehabilitation' are being carried on with the most remarkable skill and a fair prospect of success. Just imagine that H.M. told the Chancellor, who told me *to-day*, that he was thinking of offering Prince Bismarck, should he be elected to the Reichstag, an abode in Bellevue Palace! Caprivi said, telling me : 'I made no reply. But if the Emperor really does do anything which will show the world that Bismarck has regained influence over him, then *I go*, and go for the simple reason that the Triplice can no longer exist. The Emperor *himself* told Count Kálnoky that Bismarck had even at the last moment tried to force upon him a treaty with Russia, by which the obligations we have undertaken towards Austria would have been neutralised—and that it was a cardinal reason for the rupture between him and the Prince. If now,' continued Caprivi, 'the Emperor again brings Prince Bismarck into

the foreground, Austria and Italy will take it to portend that it is high time for them to come to a direct understanding with Russia, and that before Bismarck can execute the *volte-face* for Germany.'

"No one can fail to agree with this view. Whether it was correct for H.M. to make that confidence about the treaty to Kálnoky is an open question. Such a communication could not but convince the Austrian that Prussia had *nearly* played him false. Naturally, since then he is more wary than ever; and if Bismarck is again to figure from Bellevue as the Emperor's adviser, it is quite on the cards that Austria would not take long to agree with Russia at any price. For since his dismissal Bismarck has let the Russian cat out of the bag much more flagrantly. There is no possible doubt of his policy.

"The Emperor is in two minds, for the moment he takes the first step towards Bismarck, he ceases to be the first man in the Empire—Bismarck again becomes *that*. The Emperor will be his thrall, and that to the delight of the many who don't relish *regis voluntas*.

"Caprivi has gained in prestige by recent events. If he goes, *whom* will the Emperor take? H.M. should not forget how desperate his position was in March, 1890. And yet he had not then destroyed his position in the country. *Then* he was an unwritten page. To-day the page shows: '*Sic volo, sic jubeo, regis voluntas*'; 'You must shoot down your own brothers'—and so forth. Bismarck would stand better now than in March, 1890—considerably better.

"They tell the Emperor that he is powerful enough to take the first step. If he does, however, the people will say either that he does not

know how to get out of it, or has no ideas of his own.

"The question now is: What can we do to prevent it? It is of terrible importance for the future of Emperor and country. In short, it may be summed up thus: Subjection of the Emperor to Bismarck; subjection of Bismarck to Russia.

"Could you not come here to warn the Emperor before he slides into the abyss? I consider it far better for you to speak to H.M. than for Caprivi to do it. You are above suspicion, and also more tactful.

"Caprivi wants to talk to H.M. on Tuesday or Wednesday about the possible danger to the Triplice. I am not sure whether that is desirable. It will have to be very tactfully done, because H.M. must not be spared the reproach of having acquainted Count Kálnoky with the projected betrayal of our treaty obligations, thus making him distrustful of the future. I believe it would be better simply to call H.M.'s attention to the danger he personally runs in making any *avance* to Bismarck. It is such nonsense to tell him he is powerful! *At home* he is nothing of the sort. His position is as bad as it can be.

"Will you do something? Write, or come? The latter would be best. Think of the consequences if H.M. lets himself be outwitted—he will never in his life recover from the effect."

On this Eulenburg resolved to warn the Emperor. But the way he did it, the way he gave their full weight to Holstein's ideas and at the same time softened the expression of them, is remarkable; and equally remarkable is it that this time he did not tell Holstein exactly what he said—but to make

up for it, tried to give him the clearest possible idea of the other side of the question. He wrote to the Emperor from Munich on December 13 :

" I write Your Majesty this hasty and urgent letter in circumstances which most closely affect Your Majesty's interests. I refer to Your Majesty's position with regard to Prince Bismarck.

" After having been pressingly approached from various quarters to effect a reconciliation between Your Majesty and the Prince, I found myself impelled to the conviction that those interested in the reconciliation had gained Your Majesty's ear by some other means. Your Majesty knows that during the prolonged crisis of 1889-90 I did everything I could to *avert* a rupture between Your Majesty and the Prince. If, therefore, I have now embraced the following considerations of a different kind, this can only have arisen from my point of view regarding Your Majesty's interests, formed as it is according to the best of my knowledge and conscience.

" My acquaintance with South German conditions and my identification of myself with Prussia cause me to see in a reconciliation with Prince Bismarck the following dangers for the internal situation : Should Your Majesty take any step which would impress public opinion with the idea that Your Majesty were again turning to *the Prince for advice*, it would mean a declaration of bankruptcy for the Imperial Government.

" There would be riotous rejoicings among the now disaffected elements, and this would put such a strain upon the situation that the existing ferment could not fail to make itself strongly felt. That would lead to a position so difficult

for Your Majesty's present Government that I would go so far as to prophesy—and with conviction—a *complete collapse.* Or, which is still more serious, the ferment would lead, under the illusion that Your Majesty had 'rightly understood the feeling of the German people,' to smooth words about the voluntary identification of Your Majesty with Prince Bismarck, meaning that Your Majesty had been subjected to the constitutional thumb-screw—and in face of these developments Your Majesty would find himself in a far worse position than that of March, 1890.

"The attempts to bring Your Majesty into closer relation with Prince Bismarck (I do not mean a recall, which could only be the outcome of a desire following on the offer of Your Majesty's hand)—these attempts increase with the establishment of Caprivi's position.

"Your Majesty may safely regard them as a symptom of *that,* rather than as one of growing dissatisfaction in the Empire. The Chancellor's last two speeches and the commercial treaty have been nothing less than astonishing in their effect on his prestige. A reconciliation with Prince Bismarck, effected by Your Majesty, would at this moment annihilate Caprivi's undeniable achievements, and either cause him to be unsatisfactorily replaced or reintroduce the Bismarck system, which is nearly eighty years old, and would itself have to be no less unsatisfactorily replaced in a short space of time.

"I now come to foreign considerations, which seem to me even more serious than home ones, and the significance of which Your Majesty cannot too earnestly lay to heart. Your Majesty gave me your confidence regarding the manner in which you explained the rupture with Prince

Bismarck to the Emperor Francis Joseph and Kálnoky. I remember that when I learnt that Your Majesty had told the Russians of the secret alliance with Russia projected by the Prince, I said to Your Majesty : ' By doing that, you have delivered yourself *de corps et d'âme*, with hands bound, to the Triplice '—and that Your Majesty replied that that was of necessity.

" That once done, the position is that Austria knows of this projected minor treachery on the part of Germany ; and on any restoration of Prince Bismarck's influence would prefer to anticipate us in an understanding with Russia. Austria would not be at all in a position to try conclusions with Prince Bismarck before that contingency. But if it were a question of life and death, ' trying conclusions ' would be at an end, and no private letters or conversations of Your Majesty with the Emperor Francis Joseph would have any effect whatever. The worst of it is that *we ourselves*, knowing what the situation was, *would not be able any longer to trust Austria.* Which means that the Triplice would be virtually ' in the air.'

" In Italy it would be much the same thing. And all this at a moment when the Russian calamities [1] had placed us and the Triplice in an unexpectedly favourable position.

" This is the great, the urgent uneasiness which, in regard to our foreign relations, possesses me at the thought of a reconciliation with Prince Bismarck.

" And now as concerning Herr von Caprivi, my opinion is that in so momentous a decision he, as leading statesman, has the *right* to assert him-

[1] There was famine in Russia, and exports of grain had been repeatedly forbidden.

self on the question of whether a reconciliation is, or is not, at this moment desirable. Even if Herr von Caprivi did not share my anxiety or only in a very limited degree, I should *nevertheless* feel obliged to declare that the advantages of an understanding with Prince Bismarck would be very far from outweighing the dangers which must ensue from it for Your Majesty.

"What may eventually be the form, and the right moment, for an accidental meeting and shake-hands with Prince Bismarck, I cannot undertake to say. That must, as I have said, in the future depend upon Chancellor von Caprivi, whose political existence is at stake.

"Indeed it is not easy for me to write to Your Majesty in this sense. My intercourse with the Bismarck household dates from my childhood. But where Your Majesty's well-being has the word, the rest is silence. I will even go so far in plain speaking as to say that Your Majesty's personal position in the Empire has not been improved by the strong accentuation of personal rule on the most diverse occasions. Great dissatisfaction with Your Majesty *exists* in the country. We shall of course get over this. But experiments of so perilous a nature may, when there is disaffection in the country, lead to catastrophe of a kind we cannot foresee. On the other hand, the very fact that Your Majesty has laid such stress on the personal element would make the surrender to Prince Bismarck appear a most terrible fiasco for the Monarchy.

"I beg Your Majesty graciously to take these remarks as an expression of my loyal affection. They have caused me much thought and reflection."

To Holstein he wrote :

" My letter to H.M. of the 13th simply conveys emphatically my view of the disadvantages which would attach to an understanding with Prince Bismarck.

" A restoration of the old Chancellor's influence would be nothing but harmful. But how would a resumption of merely superficial relations work—relations so superficial that neither Austria nor Germany could believe in a restoration of influence ? I know South Germany fairly well, and know how it now regards affairs in Prussia : the reproach of *ingratitude* is made against the Emperor, despite the Prince's hostile attitude—and made the more as time goes on since the rupture. Greater Germany sees in Prince Bismarck—not in the Emperor William—the builder of the Empire. That the Hohenzollerns *n'y sont pour rien* is the people's idea, and that Emperor William II enjoys the fruits of the Bismarckian achievement without any conscientious sense of gratitude. This, *sans phrase*, is the point of view. It is only the minority which now desires the Prince's return. The commercial treaties have caused a very decisive change in public opinion. I was talking lately to a very right-thinking business man of the middle class, who said in so many words : ' We have not felt much confidence in the present Government and have even wished Prince Bismarck was back, although we did not like him. But now it is all different. We have firm confidence in Caprivi, and have made up our minds that he is the best man ! ' At this propitious moment for the present Chancellor, the great mass of the people regards reconciliation with the Prince as a mere matter of form—

but all the same persists in the *desire* that the Emperor should pay his *due of gratitude.*

"If the Emperor were coming from Kiel, Prince Bismarck might be on the platform at Friedrichsruh—about three minutes—and the Emperor could offer his hand. No pact, no obligations—in a short time there would be another article in the Hamburg paper—all as of old—but they would have shaken hands. At the same time there would have to be a demonstrative recognition of Caprivi. Understand me rightly—I make a great distinction between restoration of influence and a shake-hands. The former is out of the question, and the Emperor would not hear of it ; that I know. But the latter might have a good effect, if it were used in the right way.

"The offer of Bellevue I should have thought impossible only in case the Emperor went to stay there. That would have been 'restoration of influence,' or would have looked like it. And even that must be avoided. Otherwise, Prince Bismarck would have been put in a crux by the mere offer. If he refused, or if, as the Emperor's guest, he spoke against the Government, he would have put himself in the wrong. But certainly it is not to be expected that he will support the Government. Anyhow the Emperor could easily make up his mind to avoid visiting Bellevue.

"In a day or two I will write to you about something interesting in connection with the Empress Frederick's attitude. Despite Reischach and Co., *she* will never give her vote for a reconciliation with Prince Bismarck."

Things took a new turn in consequence of events in the summer of 1892—Bismarck's visit to Vienna

for his son's wedding ; the frustrated receptions by the King of Saxony, the Prince Regent of Bavaria, and the Emperor of Austria ; the monstrous attack on the German Government's policy in the interview with the representative of the *Neue Freie Presse ;* and finally, as answer to that, the official publication of the instruction to the Viennese Ambassador, Prince Reuss—the so-called " Urias Letter." A suspicion that Eulenburg had been mixed up in the step thus taken by the Imperial Government has recently been magnified into the assertion that he was the guiding spirit behind the " Urias Letter." Not to anticipate our publication of the entire collection of letters and memoranda concerning this incident, let it be said here with all possible emphasis that there is not a word of truth in that story. Eulenburg, throughout the whole episode, preserved the strictest decorum, and confined himself to delivering the instructions received, which had for their object to prevent the reception of Bismarck by the Prince Regent. He did this with such tact and grace that even when the public was informed it could take no offence. He had no sort of influence upon the Berlin decisions, and particularly avoided writing—as the Office, and especially Holstein, demanded—to the Emperor in any such sense ; but on the contrary went no further than to request that the Emperor would go by the advice of the Foreign Office. That he recommended the " Urias Letter " is a baseless invention. That unfortunate step was Holstein's work entirely. No one who knew Eulenburg could doubt that he would have disapproved the document from the stand-point of both content and form, though the very much less subtle Kiderlen was delighted with it in every way. Eulenburg openly disapproved, indeed opposed, the method

of answering Bismarck's attacks with counter-attacks ; but this was, as we know, adopted, and led to the publication of the disastrous letter. Eulenburg wrote on the subject :

> " To repel the attacks seems to me to have been necessary, that the Emperor's Government might not incur the reproach of cowardice or a bad conscience. But *this* way of repelling them I considered a great mistake, because it might lead to dangerous consequences ; for, legally speaking, intervention by the Attorney-General is quite as unthinkable as an indictment of the Prince. Therefore on June 28, in Berlin, I consulted with the Imperial Chancellor, the Prime Minister Botho Eulenburg, Ambassador Count Hatzfeldt, and Baron Holstein ; but these consultations *nevertheless* led to the decision to give battle."

After these proceedings it seemed vain to hope for even a superficial and formal reconciliation. And yet it was to come to that, because the Emperor one day, in spite of all, did resolve to take the first step. And he who persuaded him was none other than Philip Eulenburg.

Prince Bismarck had, in the beginning of September, 1893, fallen dangerously ill with inflammation of the lungs at Kissingen ; but the family had managed to keep it a secret, and Schweninger—disobeying an express command from the Emperor—had given him no information. Eulenburg was the first to hear of it, by chance at Munich, and he reported the news. Being with the Emperor some days later in Karlsruhe and Stuttgart, Eulenburg tried to induce him to telegraph a message to the Prince. The Emperor, particularly incensed by certain speeches which Bismarck had made in

Kissingen not long before, was at first by no means inclined to listen. But the persuasions of his friend won the day, and finally he showed himself willing to send a congratulatory note to Schweninger, inquiring after the convalescent's progress. In this way the ground was prepared; and when shortly afterwards even Caprivi suggested by telegraph that one of the Imperial palaces should be offered to the Prince as a winter abode—Eulenburg's old idea, to which his cousin August had now persuaded the Emperor—there was sent on September 19 from Güns in Austria a wire to Bismarck himself, containing the offer. Bismarck declined with thanks, and the newspapers sworn to his interests did their utmost to represent the incident to the Emperor's disadvantage. The Munich *Allgemeine Zeitung* especially did wonders in the distortion of facts. There could be no immediate result from the Emperor's step. But at least the brick wall of mutual silence had been broken down, and when in January, 1894, the Prince was recovering from another illness, a bottle of old Rhine wine could be sent to Friedrichsruh, to be followed up by Bismarck's visit of thanks on January 26. For the public, peace was restored—the attainable attained.

Looking back upon the previous pages, which give us a detailed picture of Eulenburg's work for Emperor and Empire, we see how well-justified was the testimony to himself, written to a prominent journalist who had asked him to intercede in his favour: "Of one thing I can assure you, that I never weary in my appointed task of reconciliation—in many different quarters. I am a man of peace. I am glad to see from what you say that you recognise this tendency in me."

Nor shall we doubt his assertion that the longer this reconciling, mitigating, pacifying activity lasted the more effort and self-sacrifice it cost him. In the depths of his heart he would fain have been anywhere but in politics. The more William II's reign displayed the disagreeable side of these, the more strongly Eulenburg could not but feel his distaste for them. So long ago as February 17, 1889, he had sighed in his diary: "Whenever I enter the Foreign Office, I feel that I must have a drink beforehand. For in that ant-heap everyone is instantly all over me. Everyone is eager, not to say officious, to bring me material, and while the ants are bespewing each other with venom, the composite picture gradually develops through the pullulation of the individual points of view." With time his expressions of painful longing for freedom and the artistic life grow more and more frequent, more and more poignant, as the abyss dividing him from the lost Paradise grows wider. On September 22, 1892, he writes:

> "I leave Liebenberg with a heavy heart to obey the Emperor's summons to Rominten, where I have at the same time (alas!) to figure as representative of the Government. At Liebenberg there are endless economical questions to be attended to, so that I really am *not* 'able to get away'—and instead, I must sit at the central shrine of politics, responsible for so much that I can master only by the expenditure of all my energy and intelligence! My head often reels with all the tasks that God has laid upon me! Sometimes I feel an extraordinary force of mind; sometimes I seem to myself a mere ass, slipping about on the ice. If I did not feel so much *compassion* for the poor Emperor, no power on earth

could prevent me from going back to Liebenberg and never leaving it again."

He made a little *apologia pro vita sua* to the Ambassador in Vienna, Prince Henry IV of Reuss, in a letter of October 18, 1893:

"How shall I excuse myself to Your Highness for having left so kind, so infinitely welcome a letter so long unanswered? I will frankly confess that I have had many a free moment—but I must add that free moments are necessary to my recuperation after really *overwhelming* toil.

"I have let slip a good many chances of making a stand and calling 'Halt!' to the exalted and many other forces which drag me by the neck into every kind of portentous affair. The temptation to ginger up my existence by being in the 'thick of it' was too strong for me, when this first began; my personal relation to the Emperor I love so much put the finishing touch; and now I cannot get out of it all without letting the Emperor down. Truly this must be the will of God, for I have been led along such strange paths—paths which are absolutely *contrary* to my nature. You, my honoured, my beloved Prince, will entirely understand me when I say how I suffer under it—despite all the satisfaction afforded by the sense of being able to be of some use in practical life. For into your heart also there has fallen a spark from God's high altar of art.

"The world to which I belong is always most vivid to me when I can linger in the native pastures of my beloved Liebenberg, and I confess to you that my calling and station weigh upon me oppressively when I walk through the golden autumn woods of my home. Only a nature such

as yours would understand this—that hell, the Foreign Office, certainly would not ! And such an expectoration would be derisively contrasted with the political exploits which have made my official position what it is. Those exploits have been in a certain degree gratifying only because of my love for the Emperor. All they have gained for me in the eyes of envious, nerve-wracked, one-sided councillors, frantically clinging to their posts, is the label of a careerist, if not indeed of a past-master in all the arts of intrigue. People think that I must have employed the most crafty methods, because only so can they explain to themselves why the Emperor so graciously preserves his old friendship for me —they do not understand that my magic arts consist in my being always the same, and *never* wanting anything.

" I find my official sacrifices the harder now because I see that my much-loved mother, impaired in health, no longer has sufficient energy to bear the stewardship at Liebenberg. She likes to take that extra responsibility off my shoulders, and does so at the cost of her health. You, dear Prince, have learnt to know what my mother is. She is simply sacrificing herself for me, and I am in the distressing position of being able to find no way out from all these problems which affect me so deeply.

" The political situation has, thank God, decidedly improved with the carrying of the Army Bill, the protective duties in Prussia, the Emperor's successes in the country and his telegram to Prince Bismarck. The success at home has had its repercussions abroad. Will you very kindly tell the Princess with my best compliments that the much-desired moment for

speaking to the Emperor about Prince Bismarck did come after all, and was of course made use of. I hope Her Highness is now pleased with H.M.—and me !

" Unfortunately the Bismarck Press has adopted a hostile tone which I do not at all understand, and is trying to heap oblivion on the fact of the Emperor's spontaneous—and surely very gracious —step towards reconciliation. It would have been so easy for the Prince, once the invitation was given, to announce his intention of paying his respects to the Emperor ! Even if he is too unwell to think of that, he might at any rate tell his satellites to keep quiet—they are working to break down the Emperor's bridge. The Emperor can do no more than he has done. He was as indulgent as he could possibly be—why should he be responded to like this ? I am reluctant to attribute dour unmitigated hatred as the motive of the Bismarck family's present activities, but how otherwise can one explain the outrageous articles in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, the *Zukunft*, etc ? "

What would have compensated another man for all the sacrifices—personal success—was for Eulenburg, who did not know what ambition was, only a slight consolation, and the slighter as with time the practical success of his efforts became more and more dubious. When, after one of the many crises which had been successfully staved off by his aid, he summarised his impressions, the tone is increasingly that of resigned melancholy. He was more and more possessed by a feeling of drawing water to fill the Danaids' sieve. On December 4, 1892, we find him on the return journey from Stuttgart, " composing long letters to the Emperor

and the Sublime Foreign Office, which apparently can do nothing without me. It is really laughable ! I often seem to myself like an enormous bottle of gum, whose only function is to stick everything and everyone together ! The whole organism lacks *cement !* But I think that after all it always was so —and in all departments. Every moment something *gives*. It is not pleasant to have to be for ever dipping the brush into the gum-bottle. One is apt to get smeared, and some day the bottle will be emptied. And then—God help the poor Foreign Office ! "

On March 6, 1894, he wrote to his friend Varnbüler :

> " I have been in Berlin and had a horrible time, for the nervousness and irritability of the Parties, politicians, Court officials, etc., is at fever-height. The Russian commercial treaty, Gladstone's retirement, Kálnoky and his huffs, *Kladderadatsch*, the trip to Abbazia, and so on and so forth—it begins to feel like a lunatic asylum ; and my equilibrium was not restored until I went out to Liebenberg with Cuno [Moltke], shot some pheasants, talked, slept, and had some music."

The impressions of these days he summarised in a memorandum which poignantly reflects all his despondency about the growing deterioration in the Government, and his utter aloofness in spirit from those circles.

Berlin, *March* 2, 1894.

> " I spent literally the whole day in the Foreign Office, which seems to me more and more like hell. Under old Bismarck one was disgusted by the terrified fluttering at the thought of Jupiter's approach, and the disagreeable capricious treat-

ment of subordinates. But now the fear of 'his' possible return and Herbert's terrorism dominates every councillor, secretary, under-strapper—unity of command is lacking, because H.M. has no unity *in himself*. The *Maison militaire*—so, in the hard-bitten 'German' style, H.M. has re-named Head Quarters !—has been pompously inaugurated with Plessen in charge, who talks of nothing but 'gun-fire.' My God, but Bismarck still has *that* crew under his coarse thumb ! And now the Engelbrechts and such enlightened gentry infest the political department, like the little Arab afreets on the dung-heaps. Then there's Holstein, sitting like a ferret in the diplomatic cockroost, seeing spectres in every corner ; and the obtuse, if plucky, South German Marschall, begging twenty times a day for crumbs from the Prussian table ; and the baleful cleverness of Kiderlen, for whom the military gentry feel an instinctive repugnance because he is 'too clever,' too much 'over their heads' with his Suabian home-truths and gibes and all-knowingness. I can tell no one what I *really* feel, because everyone is against everyone else, because the composite picture is totally devoid of harmony—and because that harmony is not to be attained. That could only be under a master-spirit such as the old Emperor was—everyone put a shoulder to *his* wheel, because it was that of the coach of State, even if the whole team, whether called by the names of Bismarck, Moltke, Albedyll, Schleinitz, or whatever, *were* biting and kicking one another.

"And now ! Everyone snapping at everyone else, hating everyone else, lying about everyone else, betraying everyone else—they are drawing the chariot of State, indeed, but not for love of

the poor Emperor, who really means well, and yet is for ever stirring up the State soup-kettle with his self-invented spoon, and preventing it from turning into any sort of soup at all.

"How I grieve for that *friend*, who is so warmly devoted to me and means so well, nobody has any idea. Nor has anyone any idea how I rack my brains to keep together what may be kept together—how I never, day or night, think of anything but how to preserve the unity of the machine called State and Monarchy, and spare the Fatherland grievous conflicts. This conglomerate of explosive forces—this political jar of mixed pickles—has not the remotest conception of what I, as an individual, represent. *I* know that they see in me only the favourite who wants to get as much as he can for himself out of it, because *all* those various species of pickles are working only for themselves and reckon with no other motive. For not one of them is, as I am, materially speaking independent, the Emperor's friend, and an artist by nature.

"Only they who know my official work believe that, being what I am, I can be capable of the tough, arduous labour of my calling. But has anyone any interest in making this known? On the contrary! That would only mean strengthening, enhancing my 'position as favourite'—therefore mum's the word.

"If I occasionally heave a sigh over the intolerable burden of my work, they laugh in my face. And if I ever expressed the burning desire of my soul—to be free, to get home to Liebenberg and live for my art, my æsthetic proclivities—why! I should only be said to be showing off, and laughed to scorn. And so mum's the word for me too."

A month later a letter from Holstein wrung from him this cry of despair : " More frequently than ever before I feel as if I were living in a madhouse. Insane narrow-mindedness—insane controversies—insane arrogance. Bedlam—Bedlam—Bedlam ! "

A meeting with Bernard Bülow, with whom he felt most at one, in April, 1894, at Venice during the Imperial visit there, invigorated him. After he had gone Eulenburg wrote : " I was sorry to leave Bernard Bülow. I feel very much in the dark as to the situation in Berlin, and am involved in affairs which it is a most tiresome and thankless business to unravel alone, for I can't by any possibility satisfy *everyone*, and have to adopt a hostile attitude to many people whom I like. A bull-fight—scarlet handkerchiefs all over the place ! "

Bülow repeatedly encouraged him to endure to the end, and so be of help to the Emperor. In March, 1894, he wrote :

" I know very well that your burden is too heavy. And yet—considering the desperate state of the country, our devotion to H.M., and your absolute indispensability—I haven't just now the courage to ask you to keep out of it. If *your* hand, which is guided by the kindest of hearts and is nevertheless so skilful, were not there to re-knit the dropped threads and keep them from getting tangled, the pattern would become hopelessly confused."

Four days later :

" Don't identify yourself too closely with the Foreign Office in our Sovereign's eyes. Stand above the conflicting elements, *tiens-toi à cheval* as regards the Foreign Office and the Maison Militaire in your relations with the Court. Make

use of your intercourse with the high-and-mighty Household. . . . Keep in as much as may be with everyone who is loyal to the Emperor—not from opportunism, but because in that way you can best serve H.M., and in the long run will be in a position to intervene more successfully even for the Foreign Office."

Again in May :

"For you and for His Majesty's service and the existence of the State the centre of gravity lies outside the Embassy, important as that is. . . . Above all, see you don't *tax yourself too far !* Apart from the fact that you, dearest fellow, must not entirely abandon the Muses, your health is *far more* important for Emperor, country, and the service than are the views of subordinate officials."

How do these delineations, these intimately known traits, this verdict from the man who best could judge him, consort with the world's picture of the intriguing flatterer, who is supposed to have enveloped the Emperor in a cloud of incense so as the better to attain God knows what selfish aims ? The reader will often already have perceived that in Eulenburg's intercourse with his Imperial friend the tone of flattery is not audible, but rather the opposite one of unwelcome home-truths. In very truth no reproach is more unjust and more contrary to the facts than the frequently heard one of "Phili the Flatterer" who corrupted the young Emperor by his fulsome praises. The proofs to the contrary, which will soon be brought forward, speak in irrefutable language.

First let some remarks be made about the kind of demeanour which Eulenburg observed towards

the Emperor. That their intercourse obeyed the appointed forms goes without saying. But while many others, both soldiers and civilians, were unfailing in servile obsequiousness, Eulenburg always preserved a respectful ease and an upright attitude. William II, with his " pals," was wont to let himself go when he was in festive mood—a clap on the shoulder, a dig in the ribs, were frequent signs of good-will. On the Norwegian cruises he used to amuse himself by making the members of his suite, including the most senior Generals, do open-air exercises and feats on deck, and would take the opportunity, when they were bending their knees or squatting, to give them a push and upset them. These " practical jokes," as they say in English, suit English taste. But with his best friend he avoided anything of this kind. " The Emperor has never touched me—he knows that I would not suffer it " —so Eulenburg declared more than once. He excused himself once for all from the morning athletics and similar pranks ; he never adopted the " English " tone of the Imperial environment. He could permit himself this independence without offending the Emperor ; for with his sparkling wit, his superiority in culture, and his high-mindedness, he gave so much to his exalted friend that he was necessarily held in estimation above the common herd. For this we possess evidence beyond suspicion —that of the Russian Count Witte. In the autumn of 1905 he was the Emperor's guest at Rominten, when Prince Eulenburg was also present. The tone of Eulenburg's and his friend's mutual intercourse was, according to Witte's impression, " as if Eulenburg had really been the Emperor." [1]

[1] " Pour tous ceux qui étaient présents, c'était en réalité le comte Eulenburg qui paraissait le souverain." (*Mémoires*, p. 379.) The passage is purposely modified in the German edition.

Those who saw the Emperor at Liebenberg know that the Sovereign was nowhere more at his ease, more natural, and therefore nowhere more agreeable and fascinating, than in that stately yet homelike house, among his friend's family circle, where intercourse was so unaffected and the air so entirely free from any taint of incense. That it was necessary to study the Emperor's whims, share his enjoyments, consider his temperament, need not be said. It would be a strange friend who did otherwise. And that the elder man should have as far as possible avoided playing the Mentor by perpetual edification and lecturing is only natural. Eulenburg's art, indeed, consisted in knowing how to draw the line and keep within it, thus guiding the Emperor's intellect and conscience without losing the way to his heart.

He once made a brief memorandum of the principles he followed in his intercourse with the Emperor. It was during the spring sojourn at Abbazia in 1894, when Lucanus, the head of the Cabinet, who had remained in Berlin, wrote to him : " I am extremely sorry that Your Excellency has had to be so inconvenienced ; but we could not leave our Imperial master entirely to himself, and had to do our best to get over the difficulties of His Imperial Majesty's choosing to undertake a distant sojourn abroad, without any of his machinery of State, at a time when Parliament is sitting." Eulenburg comments : " That is all very nice—but though I am pretty well fed-up with this everlasting tennis and the ' Christabel,' I should only injure myself to the Emperor's disadvantage if I insisted on working instead. That is precisely why he lets me say anything I like to him about politics—*because* I play tennis with him, and between rallies and pauses have a good-humoured

ear at my disposal, ready to listen to tiresome matters because he is in high spirits. *Ludere pro patria et imperatore !* It's a mad world." [1]

As a proof of how perfectly at his ease he was with the Emperor let this note find a place ; it at the same time clearly expresses his inward sentiments about many things.

" The smoking-room at Wusterhausen Palace.

" *November* 10 *and* 11, 1892.

" At Liebenberg during the shoot the Emperor invested me with the ' Court shooting dress,' which is quite indescribably uncomfortable, being in shape like a regular uniform coat and having a high collar. But as I am very frankly a civilian and intend to remain one, the military collar oppresses me not only because it inevitably recalls those utterly unbearable hours with foul-mouthed riding-masters and still fouler-mouthed commanding officers, but also because I feel perfectly sick when I have convulsively to fasten the infamous choker. The confounded thing seems to strangle me ; it jacks me up like a bearing-rein, and I feel as if I were foaming at the mouth. And why, to complete the shooting-dress, *high brown boots with silver spurs !* should be

[1] The fruit of this tennis-playing was not long afterwards gathered on a certain occasion. The diary for May 3, 1894, records a " little unpleasantness " with the Emperor about the attacks in *Kladderadatsch* and their consequences. The Emperor, urged thereto by those who surrounded him, was for " gun-fire " ; and on the question of what the world would say when it came out that he advocated duelling, said rather ill-temperedly that he didn't in the least care what the world might say. " I answered that unfortunately only private people could be indifferent to that—the Sovereign represented the national conscience. ' I've known that all my life,' said H.M. ' Hinzpeter was always drumming it into my ears.' I laughed and asked if *I* looked like a schoolmaster ? Did Hinzpeter play lawn-tennis ? At this picture the Emperor laughed, and we were good friends again."

worn, is to me an enigma. It makes me conscious that my beautiful inward freedom is a very subtle sort of affair, which feels that an Imperial mark of distinction merely turns me into Puss in Boots.

"And yet I should like to *value* this Imperial investiture, because it gives pleasure to my *friend*, the Emperor. My appreciation, though, persists in being cattish! To have to prance about in my old Liebenberg, when the Emperor visits me, got-up like that, making my reports to him in my peaceful room with clinking spurs, and as a climax actually sitting at my peaceful piano in high brown boots with silver spurs, singing songs—— !! No; it is like spiritual cod-liver oil to me. And I will *not* be dressed like the 'Imperial Household.' I am something other than that.

"To sit in this horribly uncomfortable shooting-dress in Wusterhausen Palace in the same room, on the same hard wooden chairs, that the detestable Frederick William I, with his Grumbkows and Seckendorffs, sat on, smoking tobacco out of clay pipes, was to me—despite my historic *Bird* . . . well, to put it mildly, oppressive. For now, there sat William II with all *his* Cats in Boots, booted himself, smoking with them the same sort of clay pipes—certainly, thank God, a different man from his forebear; but nevertheless, there is an atavistic touch about all this designing of shooting and other uniforms, and this forcing of his company to smoke the disgusting clay pipes as solemnly as if it were a rite—but *I* didn't. I declined, 'because I never do smoke, and would much rather watch them all getting sick one after the other.' With that remark I very insubordinately unfastened my collar, for I was nearly bursting. The Emperor only roared

with laughter, and so of course did all the latter-day Seckendorffs and Grumbkows, now called Plessen and Hülsen, and always to be found at every Court.

"But I am sure that no one had any idea of my secret revolt at finding myself in that infernal room in which a notoriously insane King scourged his son to bleeding, and conceived and matured the idea of doing away with that poor young Katte—in the room which by some sort of imbecile spittle-licking has been made into a national shrine! I tried to soothe myself by imagining that I was sitting on the very chair that my Liebenberg forebear, Royal Headkeeper Baron Samuel von Hertefeld, had often sat on. For he was a *decent* man, never to be found mixed up in all the foul doings of the period, but simply and earnestly fostering national civilisation in his capacity as Minister.

"*November* 11. The shoot was, like all organised shoots, appalling. This massacre of poor helpless creatures, utterly unable to escape from their fate of destruction, is no kingly recreation. Strangely enough, no one at Court has any sort of sense that it adds nothing to the glory of a sovereign to cause these hapless wild beasts to be driven into an immense enclosure, in the centre of which the 'noble' sportsmen are posted, pouring their shot upon the panting desperate brutes as they hurl themselves perpetually against the farthest hedges; and this never stops before all are dead, or else dragging mortally wounded on the ground until at the end of the day they are put out of their agony.

"It did me good to have the chance of a talk with King Albert of Saxony, who came late last night. We had a great deal to say, and went

into other—more interesting—matters than are ever mentioned at the Round Table of the Smoking Shrine. Most people imagine that I can only play the fool. Idiots! The North German (not to say the Berliner) is too obtuse to be able to distinguish between fooling and being mildly amusing. Fooling is like pepper; amusement is a mysterious mixture of sugar and salt. I never take up the pepper-pot unless I feel there's a vulgarian about. Otherwise I am serious—when seriousness is *called for*. But King Albert I *honour*—a clever, unassuming man with a clear outlook on policy, and statesmanlike perceptions. He is the only 'colleague' of the Emperor's who impresses him. Thank God for it! *Pourvu que cela dure!*"

No one could be less of the courtier, less of the "royal sycophant" than Philip Eulenburg was. "I know no greater affliction than a Court banquet at Berlin or Potsdam!" he once wrote in his diary. But another time, during a shoot at Bebenhausen: "Take them for all in all, this Royal couple is without any sort of airs and graces—which is a blessing."[1] During a stay in England in 1893 there is the following entry for August 6:

"This morning I had a long, tiresome talk with the Emperor about politics. He is delighted that I have been admitted 'to intimacy' with his English relatives, and declares that I have 'made a hit.' This he thinks very important and gratifying. Certainly, making acquaintance has been interesting, but I can only say that I shall

[1] On his birthday in 1894 William II had honoured him by the gift of his photograph in English Admiral's uniform. Eulenburg commented: "Every day is a masked ball for monarchs. The only wonder is that they never get sick of it. On the contrary."

bless the day which sees the end of the honour. Any day at home or at Liebenberg is not only more interesting, but more agreeable. I have long got over my interest in 'historic' personalities, having had a surfeit of such intercourse; and people in Royal positions must furnish a certificate of being estimable and agreeable before I can get excited about them. But undoubtedly one has some very remarkable experiences."

A successful gondola picnic at Venice in 1894, with the Emperor and the King of Italy, inspired the following reflection :

"What had I really to do with these two Kings, the gondola, and the turbid canal? 'Destiny!' —so people say, and I thought of the proverb.

"Not that I consider myself either stupider or cleverer than other men, only *different.* For I have always had, about extraordinary experiences, brilliant societies, curious encounters, a feeling that they didn't in the least concern *me;* I always feel, as I said above, *different* from the others. Without any kind of ambition such as they have ; without the aims and interests which torment and dominate them—and then comes the thought that perhaps it is precisely because my real longing is for Liebenberg, my quiet home, my music, my painting, my books, my dearly loved mother in the home-circle with Augusta and the sweet, dear children—that *that* is why exalted personages in every sphere are instinctively drawn to me, perhaps feeling that I really do want nothing from them. And certainly I am conscious, along with this, of the envy of ever so many people who all live under the conviction that I want innumerable things,

that I have attracted all these great ones by craft and contemptible servilities! Sometimes I really do believe that destiny now and again indulges in making a bad joke of a man's life."

The intriguing flatterer is also supposed to have been a wire-puller who was an adept at "pushing" his friends. How this fits in with his—the Emperor's "favourite"—having been the victim of all his mortal enemies, one might rack one's brains without discovering. The proof of his disinterestedness lies in his correspondence, which in all its immensity never presents the slightest handle for maintaining that he ever utilised his friendship with the Emperor for personal ends, whether of his own or others', at the expense of practical interests. There is only one exception—Bernard Bülow. He did exert himself to bring that friend into notice, because he was convinced that by so doing he was serving the Emperor's and the German Empire's interests to the best of his ability. To have recommended—but it happened very seldom—a junior diplomat or a talented artist to the sovereign cannot surely be regarded by anyone as wire-pulling. And indeed he expresses himself on such proceedings in a fashion which leaves no doubt as to his principles.

On hearing that his cousin Botho had been selected as Prussian Prime Minister, he wrote to the Emperor (March 24, 1892): "I do not know whether this is Your Majesty's or Caprivi's choice. I need scarcely say that I have had nothing to do with it, for Your Majesty knows that I don't play my cousins' games, but the Emperor's only. Indeed Botho Eulenburg's appointment would be by no means a pleasure to me, because I should perhaps be connected with it in some way, and the

mere appearance of anything like that is for me disastrous. But if Your Majesty should decide for him, I can say quite dispassionately that the choice would be a very happy one."

Holstein was written to on the same occasion :

> " It is extremely disagreeable to me that the Eulenburgs are so much in the foreground. Looked at without prejudice, mine is a thoroughly democratic nature—anything in the least smacking of cliqueism is to my mind disastrous. My political conviction demands the Monarchy ; for the rest, we have only to do our duty. I see nothing but unpleasantness for my family in the combination of Botho, August, Richard, and Philip. Envy raises its head, everyone keeps a lynx-eye upon us, and perfectly insignificant things are magnified into conspiracies."

In August of the same year there was talk of one of his South German friends being appointed to high office in the State. Eulenburg wrote of this to Kiderlen that it was entirely His Majesty's own idea, that *he* had been inclined to advise delay. " You see from this that I am working in the general interest, not in my friend's, but I should regard it as perfidious to do any more against an old friend. . . . As concerns pushing my friends and acquaintances in exalted quarters, I have a very clear conscience. I have *never* done it. I am of opinion that friends and relatives who are capable and distinguished will make their *own* way. And to recommend incapable friends would be to play the Emperor false. B. is such a remarkably gifted and valuable man that I could recommend him most warmly with a very good conscience—if that was my way."

Next day he turned to Holstein : " I forgot to

tell you that, because of the great increase of appreciation which I perceive in the Emperor with regard to you" (that is to say, the work done in co-operation by Holstein, Kiderlen, and Eulenburg), "I want to beg you more than ever to take care that we do not go against Caprivi and Marschall, or give any colour to the suspicion of a dual régime. That there is such a suspicion I can scarcely doubt. . . . As the Emperor *never* receives from me any sort of recommendation of a friend or acquaintance, he never dreams of such a thing as a clique." He wrote to the Emperor next day in the same sense.

A third person's testimony will usefully supplement this self-defence. Here is a passage from a letter of Bülow's in October, 1893. There had been some idea that Prince Reuss, Ambassador in Vienna, might be replaced by Eulenburg. To Eulenburg himself this was unwelcome, and he had tried to get out of it. Bülow wrote :

> "I can perfectly understand how you hate self-advancement. Faust complains that two souls dwell in his breast, one obstinately clinging to earthly joys with avid sensual organs, the other striving to soar above terrestrial fumes to the empyrean of sublime imaginings ; and in you that impersonal strain prevails over the personal as it does in scarcely any other man I know. And it is because such sensibility is so very seldom to be met with that it makes you peculiarly sympathetic to everyone who is capable of understanding you. But don't lose sight of the fact that your appointment to Vienna is a practical necessity. Considering how very important the post is, I should look upon it as a gross blunder if anyone but you were sent there. You must

conquer your profound objection to anything that looks like self-advancement, and reflect that when most people are as thick-skinned as hippopotami, a finely-organised nature must do violence to itself in the interest of the Imperial service, *ne quid detrimenti capiat respublica.*"

Philip Eulenburg was also supposed to be the man who wove around the poor Emperor a Web of Maya, composed of obsolete romanticism ; who encouraged him in his exaggerated notions of the " Sovereign by the Grace of God," stimulated his absolutist tendencies, and systematically concealed from him the world of actuality. The following documents will show how much truth there was in this. In June, 1891, he noted, after a talk with the Emperor at Potsdam : " Again I was surprised to find that every kind of stupid vulgar gossip seemed to reach the Emperor's ears, and none of the things that are important and useful." That he himself was earnest to show the Emperor the truth of things, the reader has already had many opportunities of learning. But how far he went in his endeavour, the kind of truths he ventured to tell the Emperor, and—to William II's honour this must be emphasised—what the Emperor permitted him to say, the following letter will irrefutably prove to everyone who reads with intelligence.

In the autumn of 1890 arrangements were being made to replace the Corps Commander at Stuttgart. Emperor and Chancellor wished to transfer the wire-pulling Count Waldersee thither. Eulenburg wrote on October 8 :

" As Your Majesty has permitted me to express my opinion quite freely, I venture—having carefully considered the idea from a general political standpoint—to say what difficulties

I perceive in so rapid an alteration in Waldersee's extremely high position. From a military point of view it may be necessary—of that, despite all I hear, I am not qualified to judge. Prince Bismarck has not yet been swallowed. This appointment, following so quickly, might cause an indigestion whose unpleasant consequences Your Majesty would chiefly have to suffer. . . .

" I have no doubt at all of the cardinal principle in all these questions, which is that *in the first place* the time is not yet come, after Bismarck's retirement, to make sweeping changes in the Ministry or any other high places ; *in the second*, that the philistine elements in Germany are puzzled by Your Majesty's restless manner of life, and find a certain degree of compensation in one thing only—*the stability of the organs of Government*. Were that compensation removed, there would follow the most serious kind of dissatisfaction with Your Majesty.

" It is not pleasant for me to touch upon these points. But my affection and friendship for Your Majesty embolden me to say what seems to me of service to Your Majesty."

We shall the better judge of this letter by reading what Eulenburg wrote to Holstein about the same time :

" What you tell me about the Emperor grieves me. I love him too much to be able to hear such bad opinions of him with equanimity. The enclosed passage from a letter to him will show you that I touched upon the subject a fortnight ago. . . . I can tell you that I have sweated blood over all this. . . . My hopes of success were slight, but I wanted to do my utmost, at

any rate. So you can imagine how glad I was to hear from you of the Imperial decision. It was a load off my mind—and I got the influenza instead."

In January, 1891, Eulenburg had been in Berlin and had there received impressions which he reckoned up after his return on the 20th :

"I found the temper in Berlin bad, when—summoned by the Emperor to a 'Norwegian evening' which is henceforth to take place monthly—I arrived there. Discontent in the Conservative Parties over the new Bills, and extreme irritation in all military circles, where with the stubbornness and sense of infallibility peculiar to a politically limited judgment and outlook, the Emperor is blamed for things which are entirely imaginary. The germ of this dissatisfaction lies in the assumption that the Emperor is deeply in debt and suffers from megalomania. They are so narrow-minded, so one-sidedly Bismarckian and malignant about the Emperor, to whom after all they *have* sworn fealty. This can be explained by the general perplexity about the real reasons—which have never been made clear—for Bismarck's retirement ; and it is Prussian enough, for that matter. Above all, revile some one ! Don't try to understand anyone, yourself least of all ! "

Reacting to these impressions, he wrote to the Emperor on January 26 :

"On Your Majesty's birthday I would fain give expression to my truest and best wishes. They come from the depths of my heart, and could not be warmer and sincerer.

"To celebrate the day I have composed a ballad for Your Majesty, but I do not send it, so that I may bring it myself on my next visit to Berlin. I have one great New Year's wish—it is that Your Majesty may be preserved as far as is possible from disappointment in others. It grieved me, on my last visit to Berlin, to find that Your Majesty has, as a result of stern experiences, begun to despair of mutual confidence. But I venture nevertheless to beseech Your Majesty, despite all such experiences, despite even the certain prospect of many a fresh disappointment, to go on putting your trust in your fellow-men. Without the human bond of feeling, at heart, one of a band of brothers in the wider sense of the words, Your Majesty would find the burden of your infinite responsibility too heavy. I too have had grievous experiences, but I am profoundly convinced that the goodness we find in others, be it ever so rare, ever so little, is a balm essential to our spiritual well-being—a balm which even an Emperor needs if he is to be happy and make others happy. It is in the rays of true human kindness, loyalty, and truth that we behold the most inspiring symbol of our own fellowship with God ; and we *need* that warmth if we are to give forth warmth. Your Majesty well knows the North Germany tendency to prize only the intellect and the speculations of the intellect. There is a great danger in that. For to the *true* German only the word that comes from the heart is really comprehensible."

On February 21 of the same year the Emperor made, at the banquet of the Brandenburg Provincial Landtag, the notorious speech in which occurred the phrase : "A spirit of insubordination

is abroad in the land ; it takes many glittering and alluring disguises, thus confusing the minds of my people and those who are devoted to me ; it presses into its service oceans of printers' ink and paper"—and so on. Eulenburg wrote of this to the Emperor on the 26th :

> " In Your Majesty's gift of eloquence there lies a *danger*—that Your Majesty may make too great use of it. The excellent effect of one speech may be entirely destroyed by a single phrase in another. If Your Majesty would be more economical of such a gift, it would be a hundredfold more efficacious. The New Year speech of the—certainly not otherwise exemplary !—Napoleon III was in his day, as it were, a King's Speech for Europe. If Your Majesty speaks on every occasion, Your Majesty squanders your advantage in having so fine a talent, and it would rejoice me to see Your Majesty making your infrequent addresses into that kind of ' King's Speech,' both as a political and a lay orator."

Fully to enlighten the Emperor on the effect of his speeches, Eulenburg collected the Press comments and sent them to the Secretary of State for his use. Herr von Marschall answered on May 6, 1891 :

> " With my best thanks for your two letters of yesterday I may tell you that I, with the Imperial Chancellor's sanction, brought the cuttings under His Majesty's notice. Your view of the necessity of giving information about all such impressions is also my own ; I go so far as to consider the most unvarnished frankness an imperative duty. . . . I hope to be able to talk

over these matters with you on your next visit. The point referred to is really the only one that gives me any anxiety, because it touches on that which amid all complications and vicissitudes must form the basis for the people's steady, unshakable trust ; and moreover I have come so to know and honour his great and splendid qualities that I feel a deep personal grief at the least shadow which may seem to fall upon their possessor. I know that you of all men, dear Count, will understand me in this."

In the autumn of this year the Emperor's inscription in the Golden Book of Munich of the words : "*Regis voluntas suprema lex*" called forth the most varied and lively comments. Eulenburg remarked in a letter to Marschall :

"It is a characteristic of the Emperor's that unfortunately he often spoils an excellent impression by putting a blot instead of a full stop at the end."

To the Emperor himself (after having sent him four days earlier, with subtle tact, a brilliantly amusing account of a shoot at Bebenhausen) he wrote on November 28, at the close of a report dealing with grave matters :

"Finally, I must not neglect to inform Your Majesty of the effect produced by the inscription : '*Regis voluntas suprema lex.*' Why Your Majesty inscribed that motto I have no business to ask. But I should be guilty of a cowardly misdemeanour if I did not write of the evil effect in South Germany, where Your Majesty has appointed me as overseer. In the first place the phrase has given much offence in the highest quarters and to the Government, because here

regis voluntas is—insanity ! (the insanity of two kings). And also because the people, quite apart from this, thought to perceive as it were an Imperial will predominant over the Bavarian will. All parties without exception have been offended by Your Majesty's inscription ; it was liable to be exploited in a manner most injurious to Your Majesty. If Your Majesty had not made the most favourable, indeed enthusiastically favourable, impression in Bavaria last September, we should now—I can assure Your Majesty !—be facing disaster. But it is undeniable that Your Majesty has imbued the admirable September picture with a shade of blue which very much spoils the effect—and in Your Majesty's interest this deeply distresses me.

" To say that Your Majesty, by such an inscription, has very greatly added to the difficulties, and destroyed many of the hard-won victories, of those who are earnest in Your Majesty's service alone, is to say something which goes very much against the grain with me, for anything I do for my loved Emperor can only be a pleasure, and the greater the difficulties the greater the pleasure. But there are people who have no such close tie of affection with Your Majesty, and these feel paralysed and disheartened when such impressions are given. That is serious at a time when we need loyal Imperialist feeling. Your Majesty will, I know, forgive this plain speaking with the graciousness and friendliness which is the dearest treasure I possess."

This letter too was communicated to the Foreign Office, and Holstein said of it : " Your letter to H.M. is an *heroic* deed ! Marschall thinks so too, and the Imperial Chancellor, to whom it was

submitted. . . . Your Sermon on the Mount about *suprema lex* is impressive."

Soon afterwards followed the letter about a reconciliation with Bismarck (December 13) which the reader already knows, and which closes with the warning: "Your Majesty's position in the Empire has not been improved by the marked accentuation of personal rule on several occasions." The Emperor answered both at once in the following unciphered telegram: "Sincere thanks for letters. Entirely agree with contents, which reflect my own ideas. Am surprised, and completely in the dark about the reason for both; unless it derives from the sphere of poetic imagination and dream-existence, you must have been most impudently taken in by somebody. The premisses are absolutely and completely false. 'I am steady as the Northern Star.' Philip, don't you fall into every fool's trap. Wilhelm."

Eulenburg reported this to Holstein with the comment: "You see that the Emperor is not touchy, and will listen to reason. I can only deplore that apparently so few people dare to speak out." He replied to the Emperor on the 16th:

> "Your Majesty has taken my remarks in such gracious and kindly part that I must express my most heartfelt thanks. I could not help having a laugh over the telegram, for now of course the Bavarian Powers-that-be are racking their brains to find out what on earth can be the matter! Every single telegram sent by Your Majesty here—or anywhere else—is naturally conveyed in some confidential way to the Government. Now, as the contents of *this* telegram can *only* be supposed to refer to *Bavarian affairs*, the effect of the words: 'Somebody must have impudently

taken you in' ; 'the premisses are absolutely false,' and 'I am steady as the Northern Star ; don't fall into every fool's trap,' must necessarily be sensational in the extreme, and highly disturbing (as well as not precisely advantageous to Your Majesty's representative). I would most humbly permit myself to say to Your Majesty that the purport of my letter derives neither from imagination nor from being taken in. As I am in relation with the most heterogeneous elements, and possess the confidence of people who hate one another and represent quite contrary interests, I can often get a clearer idea of the course of events than others can."

This made Holstein declare : "Your second letter is even more admirable than the first."

If in 1891 the Brandenburg speech had raised a dust, the effect was doubly sensational and unfortunate when a year afterwards, on February 24, 1892, the Emperor gave tongue in the same place to the boastful words : "I will lead you to days of glory !" How Eulenburg regarded this may be seen from the entry in his diary : "Everyone is asking with one derisive accord : 'What may be these days of glory to which he is *now* going to lead us ?' The dismissal of Bismarck has not as yet proved a day of glory."

The occasion seemed important enough for him to tell his exalted friend still more unvarnished home truths. He wrote on March 10 :

"I cannot help saying to Your Majesty—and I know that I may say unwelcome things without incurring the wrath of the kindest and best of Emperors—that the last speech has materially contributed to embitter the situation here, and bring grist to the Separatists' mill. Your

Majesty's great eloquence and charm of delivery exercise a fascination over your *audiences*, as the behaviour of the Brandenburgians after Your Majesty's speech has once more proved. But on a cool consideration of the content, a different impression emerges—say, under the handling of a German professor. The days when an Imperial phrase was inviolate, removed from the interpretation of dunderheads, have long gone by—and that precisely because Your Majesty's Imperial phrases are by yourself regarded in a different light, and are given too much and too frequent publicity. Here in Bavaria people get simply beside themselves when Your Majesty *speaks as* '*Markgrave*' and the 'Markgrave's words' appear in the *Reichsanzeiger*" [the Court organ] " as quasi-Imperial words. In the *Reichsanzeiger* the outlying portions of the Empire expect to hear *Imperial* words—hence to hear nothing about Frederick the Great, of whom they know only too well that he said '*La Bavière est un paradis habité par des animaux*,' and other things of that kind. Nor do they want to hear anything about Rossbach and Leuthen. It has made very bad blood."

On this plain speaking Holstein delivered the weighty verdict : " At any rate people will be able to say in the future that there was one man who told the truth to William the Second. But I really believe there was ONLY one."

The Emperor's answer, again telegraphic and again *en clair* (!) was both singular and characteristic : " Best thanks for letters, which told me nothing essentially new. Am very wretched, though, and must abstain from work. Condition caused by strain and over-exertion. Fever abated.

But still great lassitude. Shall perhaps, when better, have to get away and take a change of air. Therefore all politics, home and foreign, are for the moment out of my thoughts, so long as they keep the usual course. Best regards from yours, William."

When the best-intentioned warnings and exhortations were like water on a duck's back, a man might well lose heart about reiterating them. But soon Eulenburg again had occasion to tell the truth to the Emperor. In the beginning of May he had officially reported on the unfavourable impression made in Bavaria by a much talked-of building scheme of the Emperor's, the so-called Palace Lottery Scheme—*Schlossbaulotterie*. The Emperor had made a marginal note on the report : *Et tu Brute*. Eulenburg wrote of this :

"Your Majesty gave me a good laugh with your marginal note on one of my 'private reports.' *Et tu Brute!* So it ran (as I have just been very confidentially informed). But that reveals to me in a matter, the details of which are quite unknown to me, a more serious side ; and I am very much distressed if by these official reports I have in any way injured Your Majesty, or stood in Your Majesty's way. I beg that you will, with your wonted kindness and graciousness, forgive me, for Your Majesty knows that to have vexed or wounded Your Majesty is what I least can bear to have done.

"I could not have left the lottery question unnoticed, after public opinion had been so violently expressed ; and I cannot deny that, in view of all the difficulties prevailing here (which were beginning to abate), my one anxiety was at the thought of fresh indignation against Your

Majesty. Here, where the tendency is invariably to point to Ludwig II whenever there is any talk of building on a large scale, the comparison would be inevitable, and would give food for some *much-desired* unpleasantness. For this reason I hope for a peaceful solution of a question about the details of which, as I have said, I know nothing.

"In parenthesis I must add that, if *I* were Emperor, there would probably be a fresh palace-building scheme every year, so passionately am I interested in such matters. But as I am only Your Majesty's 'overseer in the South' and watch over my Emperor's interests like a Cerberus, I was unfortunately obliged to give tongue. Will not Your Majesty most graciously forgive me?"

For answer he received, this time too *en clair*, the following telegram: "Best thanks for letter. *Et tu Brute* meant as a joke. Don't lose your head over the squealing of the idiotic Bavarian loyalists, who fall into every trap laid for them by the Berlin free-thinkers. How often have I laughed over the incredible folly of the good Bavarians! So ease your mind about my so-called building craze. . . . William."

The inconceivable folly of this caused Eulenburg to make a stern remonstrance, which might almost be called a homily.

"Munich, *May* 11, 1892.

"Your Majesty was once so very gracious as to give me a little cipher 'for special occasions.' It is true that I have not used this cipher more than once or twice in two years. But will not Your Majesty be so gracious as to use it for such communications as that of yesterday? Surely it

is better that an adjutant or cipher-clerk should deal with a message like that than that the *Bavarian* telegraph officials, who naturally cannot keep open telegrams from Your Majesty a secret from their Chief, should become acquainted with it? When Your Majesty telegraphs *en clair* such expressions as 'idiotic Bavarian loyalists' and 'foolish Bavarians,' Your Majesty compromises yourself, Your Majesty's Government, and Your Majesty's Ambassador. Your Majesty thus makes any kind of official friendship, any kind of protestations of affection for the South German Federalists, seem merely humbug, for people believe only in what is said privately. One of the finest qualities of Your Majesty is your confidence in the integrity and discretion of officials and servants of State, among whom the telegraphists are included—but in this instance Your Majesty puts too great a strain upon that integrity. I *beseech* Your Majesty to send me a telegram *en clair*, saying that I am not to take the contents of the last too seriously, for that surely no one could doubt Your Majesty's love for Bavaria.

"That message of yesterday wounds the Bavarians in their most sensitive spot—their vanity. It may have consequences of which we can as yet form no conception. Or does Your Majesty *want* a fight? If so, I am ready; but I beg for instructions.

"Your Majesty will, with the open mind and good heart which are such shining qualities of Your Majesty's, reflect upon these words; and you could not but think me a poltroon if, *rebus sic stantibus*, I had not written them. And so I believe that Your Majesty will forgive me my *franc parler*."

How many sovereigns would have accepted such a letter of rebuke, even from a subject who was a friend, without being in the smallest degree offended? One could not wonder if thenceforward there had been a coolness, or if the Emperor had intimated his anger when they next met. Instead of this, in a fortnight, when (as every year) he met the Emperor at Prökelwitz, Eulenburg could report to Holstein: "The Emperor is so open-hearted with me as to be really touching; he shows me such confidence as in my love for him makes me very happy. I found him in a dispassionate mood all round, and quite unembittered by the trying events of the winter."

It was in the July of the same year that on the Norwegian cruise the Emperor "drank brotherhood" with Eulenburg. Thenceforward he always used the *Du* with him. It was as though he wanted to show that his friend's plain-speaking had but endeared him the more. So next year, when the critical moment of the Brandenburg Speech recurred, Eulenburg could venture to warn the Emperor beforehand. He wrote in February, 1893: "I see that Your Majesty is to be present at the Brandenburg dinner to-morrow. Your Majesty will not take it ill from a faithful friend and servant if he points out that—in case Your Majesty intends to speak—a *single ambiguous word* might, in this critical moment of the Army Estimates, give rise to much mischief-making, which would do little to help the good cause."

He heard from Holstein, to whom this was as usual imparted: "Your excellent letter did not prevent the speech. It had been in Lucanus's possession *three days* earlier, and yet he did not show it to the Chancellor." The speech gave no offence, was universally applauded, and Eulenburg could

with a good conscience congratulate the Emperor, though he did not omit to add : " I am fain to confess that I felt uneasy about a speech at this political moment."

Not more than a month later he had again to utter a note of warning. The Emperor was in Rome that April, and liked it so much that there was some fear of his prolonging his stay, though at home the Army Estimates were before the Reichstag. So his friend wrote on April 16 : " May I most humbly make a very urgent request to Your Majesty that you will be in Berlin at the crisis and possible dissolution of the Reichstag—that is to say, you might come in a whirlwind like Jupiter Tonans from Karlsruhe or somewhere *inside* Germany. The German subject does not understand —even when it is a question of the Italian Majesties' silver wedding—that Your Majesty should not *be on the spot* at a critical moment which has been talked of for half a year to the exclusion of everything else."

The Emperor took the counsel to heart, and was punctually on the spot in Berlin for the dissolution of the Reichstag.

Eulenburg had less luck next time. While the Reichstag was considering the Army Estimates, William II was absent, despite the following earnest remonstrance on June 3 :

> " I write these lines in great haste to Your Majesty, immediately before my departure for Gastein ; and I greatly dislike doing so, for I am still so much under the impression of all the kindness and friendship which I have again so fully enjoyed—so much under the spell of the fresh sea-breezes upon that delightful trip in the torpedo boat, that I can hardly bear the thought of worrying Your Majesty on that very topic of

fresh sea-breezes, whose magic influence no one understands better than I (when the weather is good !). I heard shortly before I left Berlin that Your Majesty intended to go to Kiel before June 15, the decisive day in the Reichstag. This startled me so much that I venture to impart my anxiety to Your Majesty. I should feel a *coward* if I did not do so ; but, as I have said, it is *horribly* difficult to express myself !

" Germany's coast-dwellers will understand Your Majesty—at any rate partly. *All* the rest of Germany, and particularly the South (which I know to a T) will *not* understand Your Majesty's cruise at a moment of great political tension, and will label Your Majesty's proceedings as lacking in seriousness, or even frivolous. Such criticism could not be of service to Your Majesty, after Your Majesty's having returned sooner than announced from Italy on account of the situation at home, and shown yourself to be thoroughly in earnest by the dissolution of the Reichstag. That impression could not be effaced without having an extremely injurious effect upon the elections—nor *without destroying a certain confidence which those in Your Majesty's service have acquired*, and upon which Your Majesty will have to lean, if events should confront us with a more serious crisis. If the word goes round in these circles that in the decisive days Your Majesty is to be out of reach for several hours on the ' Meteor,' there will be a falling-off in that sense of discipline which Your Majesty may possibly need in a very short space of time.

" These are my reflections ! How very much I dislike the idea of worrying or vexing Your Majesty, Your Majesty very well knows. So Your Majesty will be able to estimate the im-

portance I attach to the matter, and will graciously forgive my frankness, which *truly* finds expression *only* from my sense of my much-loved Emperor's welfare."

Remarks of this kind were then as later wholly without influence on their friendly relations. Eulenburg, when he thought it right and necessary, was never afraid to oppose the Emperor, though with all due respect ; and the Emperor, if now and then annoyed at the first moment, never bore him any grudge. The cardinal instance was on one of the Norwegian cruises. The Emperor had drafted a despatch which touched on the foreign relations of the Empire in very dangerous fashion ; and Eulenburg, as Foreign Office representative, had therefore refused to send it. The Emperor insisted ; Eulenburg's answer was : "Your Majesty has here 200 sailors, any one of whom is ready at any moment, at Your Majesty's behest, to throw me overboard. But so long as I am here in an official position, that despatch shall not go." The Emperor turned away, and for some days would not speak to him. But the following Sunday, after Divine service, he presented him with a sketch of the Empress, done by his own hand, and spoke some affectionate words—the whole incident was over and done with. Eulenburg could with perfect justice write, in the evening of his life, of his relations with William II : "I frequently told the Emperor the most unmitigated home-truths, and I must very positively affirm that he never resented my franknesses. I have always been grateful to him for this, and grateful too for the many proofs of friendship which he so gladly, so eagerly, bestowed upon me. I must repeat again and again how deeply, how gratefully, I felt his never resenting

my often harsh comments. That was why we were always so perfectly at ease with one another."

But if he had no personal complaint to make of his sovereign, it was nevertheless the same in that respect as it was in his official work—the practical result was nil. And the conviction gradually grew that all his exhortations and warnings had no permanent effect—with the result of an increasing sense of disillusionment. His Imperial friend did not keep his promises, did not learn from experience, acquired no ripe wisdom, and the virile maturity upon which, at his accession, such hopes had been built, failed to establish itself. In Eulenburg's private memoranda, at this period, sounds often an irrepressible note of anxious melancholy. There is no denying that after four years of experience, the tone of his verdicts on the ruler whom he had once greeted with such lofty expectations, is only to be described as that of—resignation. On February 2, 1894, he wrote beneath a letter of bitter complaint from Holstein: "Nor is my view of the future a rosy one, for the trend of opinion is less *for* Bismarck than *against* H.M. The poor Emperor is getting on every one's nerves, but there is no help for it. When a marriage turns out badly, the pair can separate. Between people and sovereign that is not such an easy matter. So the unhappy marriage must only go on."

AMBASSADOR TO THE ALLIED EMPIRE

I

AMBASSADOR TO THE ALLIED EMPIRE

IN high quarters it had of course long been considered whether Eulenburg's powers could not be given freer play than at the Munich Embassy. In the beginning of 1893 there had been some thought of making him Secretary of State in place of Marschall, who had lost ground with the Emperor. Holstein and Kiderlen were both active in this matter ; Caprivi, too, was said to be in favour of it. To Eulenburg himself the idea was anything but welcome ; he did not think himself at all fitted for the post. He wrote to Bülow in February : "A poor barndoor fowl like me, cockered up into an eagle ! I can hear myself cackling instead of clawing, and see myself laying an egg instead of sitting with flaming eyes on the gable at 76, Wilhelmstrasse ! The thing is out of the question." Bülow thought otherwise. He answered : "I—not as a friend, but quite dispassionately speaking—consider you the ideal Secretary of State. You would not run about in the yard like a barndoor fowl, but as a faithful, wise, and noble watchdog would guard the Empire's, and the Emperor's, door. You have, besides intuitive genius (which is beyond and above all book-learning and documenteering), a unique gift for the handling of men ; and diplomacy means working in flesh and blood. Add to this H.M.'s complete confidence, the liking of all and sundry, a great name, social charm—in short, you have everything. I should bless the day on which you

moved into the Secretary's quarters. My one and only hesitation would be caused by anxiety about your health."

Several times afterwards the idea cropped up again; but Eulenburg always repudiated it. He did not feel equal to the burden of that office, did not think himself adapted to parliamentary conflicts, and was afraid that his imperfect English would be a serious hindrance. It is true that he had yet another reason—a special one which he afterwards confided to the then Imperial Chancellor, Hohenlohe. He feared that continual official intercourse would impair his friendly, and hence so valuable, influence with the Emperor. He said this more explicitly to his cousin August, Master of the Household, who wrote in February, 1894, that a change in the personnel of the Foreign Office would, considering the Emperor's feeling against Marschall, be inevitable as the year went on, and added: "*You* must advise on this question of personnel, or else make up your mind to leap into the breach yourself."

Eulenburg commented on all this for his own eye: "Perfectly true—but not to be accomplished just now. And I am not suitable for Secretary of State, because the *perpetual* intercourse with the Emperor would impair my influence. The everlasting conflict between 'aide-de-camp' and War-office politics on the one hand, and on the other the Foreign Office, which with its *civilian* organisation and trained practical outlook could never convince a dominant military group, claiming the Emperor as 'brother officer'—all this would mean, for me, being ground between the upper and the nether millstone. Only while I represent the Emperor's friend, whom he is glad to see again, whose letters he likes and attends to, am I serviceable to him and

the Fatherland ; and so this is the only way in which I *ought* to testify my affection and gratitude to the Emperor."

It was in the summer of 1894 that for the first time Eulenburg was actually spoken of as future Imperial Chancellor. Thenceforward mention of him was frequent ; and some of the papers quite seriously reckoned, for a while, on sooner or later seeing the " favourite " at the head of the Imperial Government. He himself was well aware—and so was the Emperor—that he was not adapted for the position. He wrote the following memorandum on the subject :

> I had very urgently begged the Emperor, when once my candidature was being much discussed, *never* to give me that appointment, for which in many ways I am entirely unfitted. He answered : " Well, I don't altogether share your view, for you have seen active service as an officer, and you have been a lawyer, a landed proprietor and forester besides, and now are a diplomat by profession. Moreover, your long years of service at the most heterogeneous sorts of Courts have given you very great knowledge of the German Empire. You have abundance of natural ability, and you can talk like a book—so there you are ! And yet I agree with you that in one way you are entirely unfit to be Imperial Chancellor—*you are too good-natured.*" I implored him to stick to this opinion, and he laughingly promised that he would.

Perhaps it was an outcome of what the Emperor called good-nature, and we call nothing but genuine fellow-feeling, which offered another presumption against his fitness for a leading position. A man who is to govern well must feel the desire

and the will to do so—must, in a word, be ambitious. Philip Eulenburg was without ambition, at any rate in politics—perhaps it would have stirred him in art. But as it was, ambition seemed to him an evil, malignant thing. In deeply-felt words he warned his children against it, in a document of 1901, when by position and prestige he seemed to stand on the summit of existence.

> " Patriotism and ambition are branches of the same tree. But only the former bears good fruit ; the second is rotten to the core. A poisonous insect lays its eggs therein. I learnt what ambition is when I had a great deal of power in my hands at a critical time in politics. But only as a tempter to which I *never* succumbed. Ambition is a fight against our brother-man. Envy is its satellite, and when it triumphs pain comes along with it. It can destroy the soul, can strangle our love for our nearest and dearest, who ought to be its only motive-power. No—ambition I have *never* known. Dear children, to whom Heaven has given tender hearts, you will understand my words when the pride of life dazzles you with its glitter. Then will ambition be at your side, in all its golden glamour. Tear the veil with fearless hand from that terrible fratricidal face, when with furtive hand ambition seeks to enwrap your soul with the shimmering garment ; for *to see will be your salvation.*"

Though he would not consider any of the leading positions, it was a matter of course that the man who was the Emperor's confidant should be transferred to one of the great Embassies. In the summer of 1892 Caprivi was already planning to send him to Vienna, where Prince Reuss had just then incurred the deepest displeasure in Berlin high

quarters, during Bismarck's visit to the Austrian capital. But the Emperor was against it ; he held his friend to be " indispensable in Munich at this difficult juncture." Nor did Eulenburg at all wish to leave Munich ; moreover, as he confessed to Holstein, " it horrified him to be always more and more *en évidence*." But he could obtain no more than a postponement. In the summer of 1893 it became still more evident that the decision could no longer be delayed. The Emperor was then meditating a " general post " in high diplomatic places ; and we have already learnt that in London it was desired to replace Hatzfeldt, who was in truth seriously ill, by a more inspiring personality, and that the Emperor's friend had been thought of. A memorandum of Eulenburg's says of this :

> " The Emperor told me that the English Court wanted me badly as Ambassador in London, but as the Vienna and Paris posts would also be vacant, I was to take my choice. The poor Emperor was a little disappointed when, on account of the children's education and the proximity to my home, I asked for Vienna, and not for his beloved England."

On August 27, 1893, he was able to thank the Emperor for the appointment—it was a settled thing, but for a while was to be an official secret. There was only one personal drawback—Eulenburg respected his friend Prince Reuss ; hence it was doubly painful to be an innocent agent in his retirement. In addition the Austrian Government, which was not without some mistrust of the " favourite," had first to be won over. So the change was very gradually prepared for. As a matter of fact it was Bülow who helped to pave the way for his friend. He had just been transferred from

Bucharest to Rome ; and when he met Eulenburg in Vienna he arranged a dinner at the club, so that Count Kálnoky might become better acquainted with the prospective Ambassador. Of this Eulenburg sent an account to his mother :

"I got here on December 16, and Bülow met me at the station. The Reuss carriage was waiting for me. Bernard is in great glee about his promotion, which is now official. I am no less pleased, for things were going ill with us in Italy. A month ago I was anxious about the utterly worn-out Solms, who was no longer fit for his duties. We are in duty bound to send the most intelligent diplomat we have to Rome, in these days—and I am glad that the Emperor did not close his eyes to that fact. If the new Cabinet and the King are not *guided* by us, we shall have to face serious complications, in view of the severe financial and social crisis in Italy. That matter is now in safe hands.

"You can't imagine how charming Maria Bülow was in her delight at seeing Bernard *at last* escaped from that soul-destroying Bucharest. She was like a child, and looked like one. She is not a bit changed—like her mother, Donna Laura, who wrote positively priceless letters from Rome.

"I was affectionately welcomed by the Reusses, and escorted upstairs to my room.

"Kálnoky kept a sharp eye on me. I was guilelessness itself—wholly avoided politics and told a lot of amusing stories, so that we laughed and laughed, and Kálnoky, instead of—as he usually does—going home at ten o'clock, stayed till twelve. Bülow was radiant over this 'success.' He came back with me, and stayed till half-past one."

Bülow completed the picture on December 19 :

"Just come from the New Palace. His Majesty as gracious as could be—witty, animated, interesting *au possible.* I was profoundly moved when I kissed his hand and thanked him for such a mark of favour. His face has such a kind, almost tender expression, for all its energy. It pleases him to be able to give pleasure.

"I gave your messages, and told him about our dinner. How dramatic it had been—you, Reuss, Kálnoky, what you would say to him ; the arrangement of the table, your début in Vienna. He listened most eagerly, as one might listen to an account of a tournament in which a great friend had ridden into the lists with all the chances against him. So when I told how bewitching you had been, how irresistible—Kálnoky stiff during the soup, unbending with the fish, with the roast completely subjugated, with the sweet in a state of enchantment—and added that he had said to me that he liked you immensely, that you were the right man for Vienna, H.M. remarked : 'So Phili has done the trick ; he'll *have* to go to Vienna.' H.M. said that more than once, whenever I led our conversation to Vienna. I did not conceal from H.M. that Reuss was no longer equal to his duties ; on political grounds he was now impossible. H.M. agreed, and said : 'Yes, Reuss is quite played-out ; he can do no more.' When I said that considering the seriousness of the situation, I thought the change should soon take place, H.M. remarked : 'Certainly it can't go on much longer ; Reuss has come to the end of his tether.'"

So the time was ripe at last. In the New Year of 1894 Prince Reuss made up his mind to ask leave to retire, at the same time expressing a wish to see Eulenburg appointed his successor. This must have been a rare occurrence. It shows how little the retiring Ambassador felt himself to have been driven out of office by his successor. Indeed, he had for some time had the impression that he, and still more his wife, were "too strongly opposed to the policy of Centralisation" not to desire "a withdrawal with peace and goodwill and mutual respect." Bülow, who had been in Vienna on the return journey from Bucharest, wrote on January 1: "Septi" [the Prince's nickname] "is taking it very quietly, but is relieved to have done with being a hen on a griddle. . . . Sitta Reuss is more upset. . . . Both are entirely without bitterness about you; indeed they do the fullest justice to your delicacy and loyalty. I am glad to have succeeded in combining the State interests, which must prevail over everything else, with the discretion demanded by that sensitive heart of yours."

Eulenburg himself contemplated the change with mixed feelings. Doubtless the larger sphere of activity was attractive, but not everything was calculated to please him. Especially not the palace into which he would have to move. He wrote of this later, to Prince Reuss:

> "It is a beautiful house, but too big for me. Not in the way of furniture, for I have plenty of that, but as a place of abode. I like to be more in contact with the children, to live more cosily. And I shall need a great many servants, which I don't care for, as I like to have personal knowledge of my dependants. Otherwise I lose control."

At Christmas he had written to Holstein, anticipating things to come :

> " I find Munich pleasanter, the house more comfortable, than ever, and the thought of the change is horrible. But London " (for Hatzfeldt was ill again) " is a greater horror, and H.M.'s words ring in my ears : ' Yes—but if Hatzfeldt has to give up and they insist on having you in London—you shan't get out of it ! ' This makes Vienna more acceptable to me, and fills me with a certain anxiety ; for I have not the slightest doubt that the Queen did want me for London."

As is customary in such cases, his taking-over was delayed for more than three months, for it was desired—and by Eulenburg's advice—to spare the retiring Ambassador any appearance of his resignation being a fall. It was not until May that the move could be made.

The *Neue Freie Presse*, so early as January 17, had welcomed the new German Ambassador in singular fashion, describing him as a sympathetic personality, an author and composer of talent, and a remarkable *raconteur* and talker, who " would doubtless soon be reckoned among Viennese artistic and literary circles as one of their most popular and admired members." Not a word about the diplomat and statesman ! We can understand that Eulenburg resented this, especially as he suspected the source of this peculiar recommendation to lie in the Foreign Office at Berlin. To the Emperor he wrote of it : " Most perfidious—but I shan't lose my sleep over it. On the contrary, in diplomacy it is always well to be taken for a greater fool than one is."

He naturally found no difficulty in making his way in the new sphere. Indeed he had had many

personal ties in Vienna from his youth up. Moreover, Court and aristocracy, which ruled society no less than affairs of State, met him with cordiality. Prince Constantine Hohenlohe, the Lord High Chamberlain, a brother of the Hohenlohe who was later German Imperial Chancellor, placed himself wholly at Eulenburg's disposal, "if I can do anything about bringing things directly and quickly to the Emperor. I have access to H.M. at all times, and can discuss any subject with him."

He was especially fortunate in gaining the intimate friendship of Princess Gabrielle Hatzfeldt and her sister, Princess Dietrichstein. Princess Gabi, the cleverest woman of the nobility, by birth an Austrian, by marriage a Prussian, helped him most effectually with counsel and influence. "I owe to her," he wrote afterwards, "most material aid in achieving the difficult feat of making my way in the influential circles of Austria, which are, as ever, those of the nobility, for it encircles the '*Burg*' like an unbroken chain, and represents the motive-power in the Austrian Government. It is only by close intercourse with that caste that one is in a position to judge how the wind blows in the land of Austria. And what many German representatives took years to achieve, and often did not really achieve at all, was mine in a few weeks—thanks to Gabi Hatzfeldt's friendship."

He dedicated his first winter entirely to social duties, which he now for the first time carried out in the grand manner at his own house also. An excellent chef was engaged from Rome, and the dinners, soirées, and receptions of the German Ambassador were soon universally praised. Towards the end of this first campaign for the conquest of the Viennese pit-stalls he reported to Holstein: "I am half killed with sociabilities; and only the

THE NEUE BURG, VIENNA

consciousness of having taken my place here can console me for the lost mental hours which I have sacrificed to a really remarkably uncultivated portion of humanity."

Nevertheless he found many in this society whose friendship he came to value. Count Hans Wilczek, Count Tassilo Festetics, but especially the witty and lively Princess Pauline Metternich, must be named here. Among the Archdukes he found, as the Archduke Albert soon died, only one whom he considered worthy of close intercourse. This was the old Archduke Rainer: "The only one with whom one can talk seriously and sensibly. A clever, cultivated man of the old school, unfortunately *very* old, and so one sees him too seldom." For the rest his comprehensive verdict was given to Holstein after a year and a half: "I have no illusions about this cream of society, but I considered it my duty in Vienna to take all my fences. I took the biggest one first. So the first winter belonged to the 'first' society. Now the other people are coming along—people who to a certain extent belong in sympathy to us. The idea of ever getting a Foreign Minister out of *them* is quite hopeless. The link between Court and the leading aristocracy is too close a one for that. And so, even for an Ambassador, it is *absolutely* necessary to have a footing in that group."

"The other people" were the artistic and scientific groups. Here there were men who really had something to offer him, and whose friendship he prized. Two above all deserve mention—Professor Hartel, distinguished both in learning and politics, who had for years been Minister of Education, was steadily German in feeling, and had unlimited confidence in the Ambassador of the German Empire; and then there was the talented

littérateur and dramatist, Baron Alfred Berger. There were several others with whom Eulenburg felt as much at home as of yore in the Munich artistic circles. Among the foreign diplomats he found an old acquaintance, the Nuncio Agliardi, who welcomed him warmly, saying "*Je vous souhaite de ce moment-ci la bienvenue à Vienne, et je suis sûr que nos relations seront les mêmes qu'à Munich, c'est-à-dire ouvertes et cordiales.*"

He was soon on the best of terms with the then Russian Ambassador, Prince Lobanov. They lasted when the latter, in the course of less than a year, became Foreign Minister. Eulenburg told the Emperor in March, 1895 : "My really intimate relation with him has now acquired a certain importance. He *genuinely* likes me, and was quite sentimental over our parting. 'We have seen but little of each other, as life goes,' he said to me ; 'but I feel more confidence in you than in many an old friend.' I said that perhaps we might be useful to our respective countries by means of our friendship ; he might keep me well-informed, if ever it should be necessary. Lobanov very warmly agreed."

Lobanov did not make use of this agreement. Nevertheless it proved serviceable to Germany, when soon afterwards the Russian Ambassadorship in Berlin became vacant by the retirement of Count Paul Schuvalov. He had been Germanophil ; and now the appointment of Count Muraviev, who even when he had been Councillor of Embassy in Berlin had borne a bad political reputation, seemed imminent. Eulenburg, by a personal appeal to Lobanov, managed to avert this danger and obtain the appointment of his old Munich friend, Count Osten-Sacken. With Lobanov's successor in Vienna he did not get on so well ; he found him "beyond all conception boring."

On the other hand, one of his best friends was the Italian Ambassador, Count Nigra. This learned, sensitive writer, who was also a shrewd and cosmopolitan statesman, with reminiscences reaching far back into the Napoleonic era, was quite extraordinarily looked up to in the diplomatic world. Eulenburg found in him just the sort of companionship he wanted, and Nigra showed the newcomer great friendliness and implicit confidence. In Eulenburg's Memoirs there is a biographical sketch recording their companionship.

Among his most intimate friends was soon reckoned Baron Nathaniel Rothschild, the senior member of the Viennese branch of his house, who however so disliked finance that he had resigned his place as manager of the bank, and enjoyed his immense fortune as an amateur of the arts, a princely entertainer, always ready to assist friends and acquaintances, generous, genial, and as a matter of course much preyed-upon in many respects. Describing this unusual man, Eulenburg wrote :

> " That the Rothschilds are Jews—and are probably obliged by very stringent family arrangements to remain Jews—is a circumstance of which a Christian has to make the best he can. Though personally I take a very firm stand as a Christian, I have all my life been objective enough to distinguish between Jews and—Jews. I never could be repelled either by my friend Binge of university-days being a Jew from Frankfurt (he won the Iron Cross in 1870 and was liked by all us " aristocratic " students), nor by my friend Nat Rothschild's Jewishness. Certainly he looked rather Jewish, despite his fair hair and beard, but I often wish that all my own class of people had the character, the heart, the

knowledge—and the manners—of my friend Nat. He was the consummate 'gentleman'—inwardly and outwardly—in his demeanour and in the way he played the host at his magnificent palace in Vienna and his country seats.

"There was no ostentation—but I might say that every object one saw in any of his houses possessed real artistic value, and was displayed in a manner which showed very unusual taste and the finest feeling for style. And it was likewise with his social gatherings, whether dinners, musical parties, or country sports. In every single thing one felt the artist and the man of unerring taste. He hated ostentation, but anything he offered had to be consummate to the last degree in form and content. . . . The pleasure it gave me to be shown his magnificent treasures by Nat, and the pleasure it gave him when I drew his attention to some fine shade in this or that *objet d'art*, I want especially to record, because we were so closely drawn together by those supreme delights."

His relations with Rothschild were in some ways politically valuable too. For instance, they enabled Eulenburg to hear of the secret understanding between Italy and France—which produced Italy's defection from the Triplice—before it was an accomplished fact, and to inform Berlin of what was impending.

The principal personage, the old Emperor Francis Joseph, had been shortly before encountered by Eulenburg during his official stay at Abbazia. Emperor William had presented him, and Francis Joseph had said that "he was very much pleased about his appointment to Vienna, that he would be very well received there, and that he begged him

to preserve in its integrity the friendship between the two nations." On a cruise among the Dalmatian islands the old Emperor had then distinguished him by long and animated conversations. Eulenburg confided to his diary the feelings with which he himself regarded his new position. It affords us an explanation of the successes he was to have in Vienna.

"That I should ever in my life enter into personal intercourse with the Emperor Francis Joseph was a thing I could never have dreamed of in my youth, when he was the ideal figure of my childish imagination. My dearest friend, during my whole childhood, was my contemporary in age and cousin, Fritzi Hess-Diller, the adopted son of the illustrious Field-Marshal Baron Hess. . . . The Austrian *milieu* of the Diller and Hess families . . . was in my infancy a sort of thrilling fairy-tale world into which I, in 1857, as a ten-year-old boy had had a glimpse at Reichenhall, Salzburg, and Vienna (where we stayed with the Hesses). At that time the Austrian Army, after the glorious victories of 1848 and 1849 in Italy, represented the quintessence of all the military virtues—and of elegance. And it all centred in the *youthful* hero, Emperor Francis Joseph, and his famous Field-Marshal Hess, Chief of Staff to the veteran Radetzky, who had won personal recognition as a young officer from Napoleon in 1805. A world of happy childhood and youthful dreamings rose to memory —and therefore no personality on earth, among all the potentates and celebrities with whom I had personal intercourse, ever awakened so unique an inward emotion as did the now venerable Emperor. For here my heart spoke

too—my childhood shone forth, in sunlit memory, as I gazed.

"Was it perhaps because some sense conveyed this emotion to him, that the old, taciturn, quiet and kindly man was so remarkably forthcoming at this first meeting, and talked so much and so circumstantially with me among the dream-like islands that everyone was astonished? Perhaps it was only because he felt that I always talked with 'exalted' personages as a human being, and nothing else, and because I told him about my first visit to Vienna, old Hess, the Prater, and the Danube. Childish stories from Reichenhall, at which he laughed so heartily—not a *word* about politics, not the smallest allusion to them. . . .

"The conversation was no very lively one, for the Emperor Francis Joseph is monosyllabic, not to say dull. However, I succeeded in making him laugh several times, which delighted Emperor William. It would have been ghastly but for that, he declared."

During the eight years that Eulenburg represented the German Empire in Vienna the old Emperor kept up a cordial personal relation with him. His gift of entertaining others was of particular service to him in this respect. For the veteran monarch, crushed by destiny and oppressed with the cares of State, was thankful for any distraction, provided it did not offend his sense of decorum and ceremony. Eulenburg understood that art. He records with justifiable satisfaction a success of this kind. It was at the banquet for the German Emperor's birthday in 1896, and the German Ambassador sat in the place of honour at the sovereign's side.

FRANCIS JOSEPH, EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA

"I took pains to enliven the solemn tedium which always prevails at such Imperial banquets, and must weary the old Emperor even more than the dinner itself, by telling him simple, amusing stories. For to cheer up the poor old man whose destiny has been so tragic is perhaps even more of a pleasure to me than it is to him. Indeed, I was almost too successful with my story about the Princess Karl's duel,[1] for the dear old gentleman could not stop laughing, and the mute Court circle and the pompous Generals couldn't be sure how to behave in face of the Imperial hilarity. All around I saw nothing but faces convulsively and dumbly grinning, for of course I had told my story in the discreet tones of a courtier, and not as Prussian officers do at a rowdy dinner. So the unfortunate listeners had not heard a word about the duel, and were merely filled with agreeable curiosity at 'seeing His Majesty in such good spirits.'"

Everyone can see for himself how valuable such very pleasant relations with the sovereign must be to an ambassador, even in quiet and normal times—especially when, as in the Austria of those days, the sovereign himself directs his country's policy. But between Germany and Austria, when Eulenburg went to Vienna, matters were not as they should be between allied nations. There had been distrust at Court and in the Ballplatz ever since Bismarck had made his public attacks upon the Triplice and put forth his propaganda for

[1] The Princess Karl of Prussia, mother of Field-Marshal Friedrich Karl, a rather punctilious lady, had felt herself slighted in her capacity as Colonel of a battery of horse-artillery by her very impetuous son, and had challenged the Prince to a duel. Emperor William I was obliged to intervene, and put a stop to this crazy proceeding.

Russian support ; and it was known that Prince Reuss was regarded by his own Government as an adherent of Bismarck's. Hence the Prince's relations with Count Kálnoky had, as Eulenburg was soon to discover, gone very much astray.

Moreover, Vienna was uneasy about the now unmistakable trend of German statesmanship towards Russia, and the first signs of tension with England—especially when in the spring of 1894 an English proposal for the conclusion of a compact with the Triplice for defence of the Straits and their Mediterranean interests had been squashed. Austrian policy had lost no time in drawing practical conclusions. Kálnoky was openly Russophil, more so even than his Emperor, and said quite frankly that " it would be well for *one* Power in the Triplice to be in a position to parley with France." And President Carnot had just received the most illustrious Austrian Order. Eulenburg did not dare tell the Foreign Office all, because he feared that they would completely lose their heads there ; and that Kálnoky, who had already had some pin-pricks, would declare once for all in favour of a Russian *rapprochement.* Moreover, there was talk of marrying the very Russophil Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the throne, to Princess Hélène of Orleans. The Prince of Wales was active in this—reason enough for the representative of Germany to be on his guard.

However, Eulenburg himself was most cordially received by the Ministers. He was soon able to tell the Emperor : " My inaugural visit to Kálnoky to-day went off very well, almost tenderly on his side. We were soon head over ears in politics." To his predecessor he wrote on June 21 : " Kálnoky is very friendly with me. Full of studied attentions and a sort of good-nature which makes things easy

for me. I only hope it is genuine." The difficulty was that in the Wilhelmstrasse they had nothing to learn about their Austrian. Holstein resented his independence, and Marschall was offended by having been in some way slighted. Eulenburg therefore considered it his task to restore confidence by making his reports as mild as he could. He would have had a better chance of success if just then the bad feeling in Berlin itself had not been given expression in intercourse with the Austrian Ambassador there, so that Eulenburg was finally driven to appeal for help to Count Hatzfeldt in London.

These difficulties ended by solving themselves. First Kálnoky, by the death of Czar Alexander III in October, 1894, lost his chief support for the Russian *volte-face*. He then again turned eagerly to Germany. Next his own position became precarious, and in May, 1895, he had to retire. Eulenburg had long since taken his measure. So early as June, 1894, he had told the Emperor: "I thought him cleverer than he is, before I knew him. He is a boulevardier—no more. He imitates Bismarck in his conversation, which is a sort of soliloquy; and he takes his Slav cunning for genius. This self-deception gives him a manner which impresses many people." He regarded the change in the Austrian Ministry as all to Germany's good. Not that he at all exaggerated Goluchowski's merits, but he thought him a perfectly loyal ally, which was not his opinion of Kálnoky. He expressed himself thus to the Emperor:

> "To speak frankly, I prefer to have a Foreign Minister here who cherishes no sort of doubt that he has to reckon very seriously with me, than one who has a fancy for leading other people by

the nose—and our friend Kálnoky indubitably has that fancy. I don't forget to him the way he behaved when the English, through the Prince of Wales, were making up to Russia and there was a prospect, however slight, for Austria of a European combination against us. . . . A member of the Council who knows all the ropes observed to me that we should do well to treat the Count with the utmost caution, and keep a sharp eye upon his proceedings. That opens abysses ! "

He elaborated this picture to Holstein :

" Be sure that Austria, which is to say Goluchowski, is really *only afraid.* I have noticed a steadily increasing, almost enthusiastic affection for the Triplice. The perfidious, irresponsible Russian policy is *merely* the outcome of the Polish Count's deadly fear of finding himself isolated in face of Russia."

Though the Russian peril had for the moment been averted, difficulties now arose between Austria and Italy. A letter to Holstein in December, 1895, had much to say of this :

" It's incredible, the accumulation of spite and wrath cherished in the hearts of infatuated personages here against Italy. . . . You wouldn't believe what trouble I often have to keep our dear allies united. . . . So please give me a free hand. . . . There will be difficulties when the time comes for renewing the treaty with Italy. Everything will then depend on the momentary situation. Kálnoky would have broken away—and gone straight to Russia and France. Goluchowski won't do that. . . . Now we can see how valuable he is to us."

Then another cloud began to gather ; in July, 1895, the Liberal Gladstone-Rosebery Cabinet fell and was replaced by the Salisbury administration, which, in order to detach Russia from the Far East, sought to liquidate the Turkish question—partition of European Turkey with the bribe of Constantinople was the order of the day. In Vienna this caused the utmost uneasiness ; it was desired to prevent at all costs and by any means the Russian possession of Constantinople. The support of the German Empire was felt to be the best way of ensuring this. At Berlin they turned a deaf ear. The old Bismarckian thesis, that Germany had no interests to serve in the Balkans and the Straits, prevailed. Eulenburg, who was personally steeped in this policy and believed it to be the right one, found himself in the position of having to make Goluchowski see clear in the matter. He had no trouble in so doing, as he was able to report on August 14, 1895 :

> "I have left Goluchowski not the *smallest doubt* that we will never involve ourselves with the Balkan question, and that our policy on that point is *unalterable*. He acquiesced with some slight regret, but without any bitterness. I assure you that the good Count's ingenuous interpellation of me on these matters shows me there is no danger at all, so long as we remain friendly and firm. An agreeable contrast to Kálnoky's methods, which would be highly inconvenient to us just now."

It was not so easy to persuade Emperor Francis Joseph out of the conviction that Russia in Constantinople meant the call to arms for Austria. Even Goluchowski had gone so far as to say : "While I am in office, I will not acquiesce in

Russia's going to Constantinople. In this view I have H.M. the Emperor wholeheartedly on my side." At a visit to Stettin for the manœuvres in September Francis Joseph brought up the question with the German Emperor, who used all his eloquence, but in vain, to persuade his ally that it was better to let Russia have Constantinople and demand compensation elsewhere—say, Salonika. The old Emperor would not see it ; *status quo* in the Balkans was simply his *ceterum censeo*.

But there were those in Austria who thought otherwise. The Ambassador in Petersburg, Count Wolkenstein, was in favour of an understanding with Russia, and Constantinople as bribe. He indeed urged a far-reaching policy of concession. He was ready to yield South Tyrol to Italy, since it could no longer be held against the pacific Forward elements in Italian politics. A whole party at Court, among them the Lord High Chamberlain Prince Hohenlohe, thought likewise. The very influential Count Badeni, then Lord-Lieutenant in Galicia, and later Prime Minister, expressed himself most pessimistically on the question :

> " Any war is an *impossibility* for Austria. If we are attacked we shall accept the situation and trust in God, but a war of aggression about Constantinople or any other Balkan question would be madness. A heterogeneous State can *never* go to war without injuring itself. Victory or defeat, in such a conglomerate of nations, brings almost the same difficulties with it."

Eulenburg, for the sake of exercising a moderating influence in the Constantinople question, made use of his personal relations with the Chief of the General Staff, Baron Beck, at one time A.D.C. to

Field-Marshal Hess and therefore intimate with the Hess-Diller family, which was related to Eulenburg. He put the simple question—could and would Austria wage war, unsupported, with Russia? On Beck's admission that Austria alone was powerless and that, moreover, Constantinople was not worth a war, Eulenburg urged him to work on these lines. This, too, produced the desired effect. Next time Beck gave him to understand that H.M. was not now so implacable. From this he concluded that Count Goluchowski would somewhat modify his views.

Finally it turned out to be a mare's nest. The Russians never set foot on Turkish soil, were unchangingly East-Asian in tendency, and the Oriental question remained as it had been for nearly twenty years.

In place of this the Anglo-German misunderstanding began to take effect on Austrian relations. The first unmistakable alarm-signal—the Kruger telegram in the New Year of 1896—made a painful impression in Vienna. Eulenburg reported to Holstein :

> " Our attitude towards England alarms and perturbs the very soul of the people. But this will pass. Not so soon, however, will pass the feeling . . . that they cannot rightly tell where to have us. For on the one side we look favourably on the *accord à trois* " (the understanding between England, Austria, and Italy about the protection of the Straits), " and on the other we are still on the worst possible terms with London. I frankly confess to you that I myself don't any longer know exactly what my course should be."

After all this, it must be granted that it was no

easy task to represent the German Empire in those years, especially when we remember that fidelity to the alliance was even for the most loyal Austrians conditional on their own status as a great Power remaining unmolested. Eulenburg's conception of his task in that respect was set forth in a letter to Bülow of December 6, 1895 : " The tone I take in Vienna must be *vigorous*, for we have the upper hand, and *there must be no doubt about it.* Of course if one goes to the Palace with the face of a Privy Councillor from Berlin and makes ominous remarks, one isn't likely to be popular in Vienna. But I shall soon find a formula that will not be offensive." That he completely succeeded in this, Bülow could certify when he, then Secretary of State, paid his inaugural visits in Vienna. Still under the impression of a conversation with Goluchowski and an audience with Francis Joseph, he wrote to Eulenburg on July 14, 1897 : " Goluchowski as good as said that but for you it would have come to a collision—not with him, but with Francis Joseph. He raves about you ; your prestige in Vienna is enormous."

The difficulties with which the German Ambassador was increasingly confronted did not come from the Austrian side, but from home. In October, 1896, it was Prince Bismarck who by his revelation of the Russo-German secret treaty set Vienna by the ears—more, it is true, in society and among the populace than with the Emperor and the Government, already well enough informed. Then in the beginning of 1897 came the quarrels between Turkey and Greece over Crete. On this occasion it happened that a Russian suggestion immediately found favour in the Wilhelmstrasse, though a similar one from Austria had a few days before been rejected. This naturally caused great

dissatisfaction to Goluchowski and Francis Joseph. Eulenburg wrote to the Imperial Chancellor on March 6 :

" I must express my regret to Your Highness about an incident which I did my utmost to prevent so far as I could.

" From my letter to Holstein Your Highness will have seen that the feeling here is not good. Goluchowski *knows* the view taken of him by the Foreign Office. Not in any way through me, as you may well believe. But there are too many channels between Berlin and Vienna. Therefore our bland acceptance of the latest Russian suggestion, after having refused the very similar Austrian one a few days before, is a slap in the face for Goluchowski. It was possibly intentional. I have done my best to throw oil on the troubled waters, but they remain swollen and turbid. Not that he has any idea of wavering, but he is in the worst possible temper. I cannot and may not conceal from Your Highness that his animosity is directed not against His Majesty, but the Foreign Office, though in no sense personally against Your Highness.

" Unfortunately Emperor Francis Joseph shares this dissatisfaction, and has left for Cap Martin, offended by the management of affairs, and moreover wounded by our ' running after Russia.'

" I have been told of this dissatisfaction by others besides Goluchowski.

" Though I do not at all advocate any kind of action or explanation on our side for the purpose of clearing up the situation, and would avoid the least appearance of ' begging pardon,' I would nevertheless suggest that earnest consideration

be given to the question of whether it does not seem imperative to spare Austrian susceptibility, as personified in Goluchowski, *so long as* we are, or desire to be, the allies of Austria. My efforts in this direction are rendered futile, if they do not correspond with the nature of Berlin's relations with Goluchowski."

He spoke much more plainly to the Emperor on the same day :

"These lines relate to the political relations between Germany and Austria, which have had a serious set-back. As usual, I shall speak very frankly—otherwise my whole communication would be useless.

"In my last letter I pointed out to Your Majesty that the Foreign Office was extremely jumpy, and Your Majesty caused Scholl to telegraph to me from Hubertusstock that that was connected with Your Majesty's *personal* political action. As a matter of fact that *is* so. Now this effect upon the Office would concern me but little if its results did not show in other directions.

"Your Majesty's conversations with Szögyeny" [Austrian Ambassador in Berlin] "while ostensibly concerned with the utterances and minutes of the Foreign Office, had many other shades of meaning. Szögyeny reported word for word, and Goluchowski dwelt *solely* on these *nuances*. That filtered through to Berlin, and there were comments of such a nature as to produce not only a certain amount of tergiversation between the German and Austrian Cabinets, but also a Press-campaign which excited strong feeling. I have had much trouble

here in restraining greater animosities. The case stands thus : Proposals from Austria were made in Berlin, which were almost equivalent to the latest from Russia regarding Greece. Goluchowski stated four or five points. To this Austrian proposal Berlin immediately replied : 'The proposal is not considered opportune. Possibly it might be reconsidered later.'

"Goluchowski showed some slight offence, but spoke very sensibly and quietly, saying he would be glad to fall in with Germany's views.

"Two days later followed the Russian proposal, which we accepted without delay. This slap in the face for Goluchowski was, so far as I understand the situation, *intentional* on the part of the Foreign Office. A sort of display of sheet-lightning against everything that Goluchowski said or did, I had long ago observed.

"I am firmly persuaded that Your Majesty did not intend this consequence. With the great susceptibility that prevails in Austria regarding anything which concerns our relations with Russia, the incident has here given the impression of a public 'running after Russia,' and quite apart from the snub to Goluchowski, has caused *extreme dissatisfaction.*

"I had rather an unpleasant scene with him, and did what I could to soothe him. He said that he could easily set matters right with Your Majesty—but *not with Your Majesty's Government.* However, *his* dissatisfaction was not the important point. He was merely a unit among other units, but the Emperor's marked dissatisfaction was a serious matter. The Emperor had taken this treatment of Austria in very bad part—and that mattered more than anything else.

"I have had confirmation from other quarters

of the Emperor's dissatisfaction, when he left for Cap Martin.

"I am now of the following opinion :

"1. If we wish to preserve the alliance with Austria—the Triplice—care must be taken to give at least the impression that we too value that alliance. Otherwise we shall one fine day so wound the vanity of Austria that there will be a rupture. We need not by any means throw ourself into her arms—each has a right to work for his own separate point of view ; but a chivalrous treatment of allies is essential. That has not been observed. I regret that I was not instructed to convey the arrangement, if it was inevitable, by word of mouth in this place.

"If Germany wishes gradually to detach herself from Austria—well and good. Then we can take a still stronger line. *But not otherwise.*

"2. So as to avoid the appearance in foreign eyes of a divergence between Your Majesty's views and those of the Foreign Office (which would be very regrettable because the Cabinets would cease to trust any note whatever from Prince Hohenlohe or Marschall, while nevertheless Your Majesty is not in a position to deal personally with any, even the least important, proceeding on our part) it is essential that the conversations of Your Majesty with the Ambassadors should *always* in content correspond *so absolutely* with the attitude of the Foreign Office that a misunderstanding, a divergence, nay, even a nuance, is out of the question. Otherwise the Cabinets will have a sense of insecurity and even *irresponsibility* in the German Government.

"The Foreign Office MUST be Your Majesty's machine, and one which functions with perfect

accuracy, but—I beg Your Majesty's pardon a thousand times for my frank expressions !—it might happen that Your Majesty's *personal interference* destroyed the functioning of the machine.

" I must repeat that solidarity between Your Majesty and the Office is an *urgent* necessity. Separate efforts, especially in *gravely* critical moments, are pregnant with danger for Your Majesty and the Fatherland. It is as though Your Majesty, during a campaign, suddenly wanted to interfere with the plans of the General Staff, or instead of on the 10th, 11th, or 12th day of advance insisted on taking the blue train to the frontier on the 4th or 5th ! In certain circumstances, the fate of Germany might depend on such a proceeding.

" No ; Your Majesty has carefully arranged the advance, the plan of campaign—and the policy—with your organs of Government, your instruments ; Your Majesty guiding, leading—but you cannot contravene the arrangements you have yourself approved ! A slight, almost imperceptible divergence between Your Majesty's utterances and those of the Foreign Office may, by giving the impression of vacillation, produce an effect which Your Majesty had not at all anticipated.

" Your Majesty will be kind and gracious enough to pardon my outspokenness. That I am not one-sided, let this copy of a letter testify —in which letter I have given the Foreign Office my views in unadorned language !

" Returning to the original reason for these lines, I would earnestly beg Your Majesty to *do nothing for the present.* Neither in regard to Austria (which would seem like an apology or a confession of a not entirely well-regulated

machine), nor to the Foreign Office—that would make my position well-nigh untenable."

Here we catch a glimpse of the ultimate causes of all this friction. One of them was an old and deeply-rooted hatred of Holstein's for Count Goluchowski. They had been Secretaries of Legation in Paris at the same period, and the Count—very popular in the drawing-rooms, and married to a Princess Murat—had let the by no means dazzling Prussian feel in how little esteem he held him. That was the kind of thing which Holstein never either forgot or forgave; and when his enemy became Austrian Foreign Minister he saw a chance to revenge himself. German policy was to serve his purpose of "getting his own back," and so the allied Minister got one snub and pin-prick after the other. Eulenburg's friendly relations with Goluchowski were watched by Holstein with suspicious eyes, though it was just these which enabled the Ambassador to speak more freely than anyone else could. So early as the end of 1895 things had gone so far that Eulenburg no longer dared report explicitly to the Foreign Office on anything in which Goluchowski was concerned, lest Holstein should be irritated into taking steps which would put an end to any reasonable policy.

A second circumstance which then made the German representatives abroad find their work more difficult was that in the meantime an increasingly perceptible lack of solidarity between the Emperor and the Foreign Office had made itself felt. We shall now turn from Eulenburg's activities in Vienna, and consider the other aspect of his work—his frequent participation in the Imperial Government's doings, or (as we called it earlier) his position as Ambassador of the Government to its own sovereign.

II

GOVERNMENTAL CRISES

EULENBURG had been barely six months in Vienna when an event took place which was definitely to affect him and his work, and form an important chapter in the history of William II's reign—namely, the fall of Imperial Chancellor Caprivi. As in so many other things of which he was entirely innocent, the blame for this was attributed to Eulenburg. The mere fact that the Chancellor's resignation was decided on while the Emperor was at Liebenberg sufficed to prove that the host must have pulled the wires. *Kladderadatsch* had the audacity to depict Eulenburg and Kiderlen, who also happened to be present, mixing the poisoned cup for Caprivi. These contemporaries and politicians, in their integrity and penetration, did not pause to reflect whether it was likely that Count Philip would have put the rope round Caprivi's neck when at the other end his cousin, Count Botho Eulenburg, would likewise be strangled—the Prussian Prime Minister being obliged to retire along with Caprivi. How the thing really happened may be broadly indicated here.

For some time the Emperor and Caprivi had been at loggerheads. Differences of opinion on the question of reinforcement of the Army and length of service had created an unhealthy atmosphere, even before the tragi-comedy of the Zedlitz Education Bill had plainly revealed to the Emperor his Chancellor's limitations as a statesman. As

a final stroke, he actually learnt that Cardinal Kopp had earnestly warned the Chancellor against such an experiment, and that the latter had disregarded his advice, of which the Emperor was not informed. William II, not unjustly, described this proceeding as "unqualifiable."

Emperor and Chancellor got on no better as time progressed. On the contrary, Caprivi became more and more obnoxious to his sovereign. His obstinacy, and his insistence on the "virtue of seniority," were more than the young ruler could stand. By August, 1893, so many rubs had embittered their relations that a crisis was momentarily expected.

Philip Eulenburg, then and afterwards, upheld Caprivi and defended him as best he could to the Emperor. To the weaknesses of his superior in the Government—a certain lack of horizon, a certain naïveté in judgment,[1] obstinacy, and want of elasticity in the handling of men and things—he was not blind. He could have raged against him when more than once he found his work in Bavaria hindered by these attributes of his chief. His suggestion of buying a distinguished Munich newspaper for the Empire was declined on the ground that "such a way of spending money would be irregular." Eulenburg commented: "Sometimes the good Caprivi is apt to behave like a subaltern or clerk." It was more serious when the Chancellor, in 1892, made the glaring mistake of entrusting the inspection of the Fourth Bavarian Army-Corps to Prince Leopold, so that the Bavarians, militarily speaking, became a "family party," and the Emperor as Supreme War Lord of the Bavarian

[1] "The policy of honesty," he remarked with reference to this, "can only be carried out after Bismarck's fashion—by deceiving people in essentials."

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troops was practically superseded. Eulenburg warmly protested, but did not gain his point. Nevertheless he always intervened for Caprivi. "It is to me a categorical imperative that I should support his policy," he wrote to Holstein in April, 1891; and he readily acknowledged the Chancellor's fine personal attributes. After a talk with him he would sometimes feel that "Caprivi was a real refreshment, with his lucidity and his quiet ways."

When in August, 1893, during the visit to England, the tension between Emperor and Chancellor was at its height, Eulenburg took his chief's side with warmth and energy. In a long letter from Kiel, immediately after his return on August 12, he told Caprivi of his interview with the Emperor.

> "His Majesty's excitement was so extreme, his expressions so energetic, that I felt obliged to point out very earnestly the dangers which might result from such agitation and a possibly vehement scene of explanation with Your Excellency. I said that Your Excellency, in full conviction of well-doing, might be driven by such rebukes to resolve on resignation; that it was within my knowledge that the tone of some Imperial telegrams had already wounded Your Excellency. His Majesty refused to see things in that light. He observed that in all the recent eventualities he had stood by Your Excellency, and therefore had a claim on your gratitude. If Your Excellency should permit yourself to take the extreme course, His Majesty declared that he would call upon Your Excellency, as a General, to assure him of your retaining your position.
>
> "I observed with pleasure His Majesty's intention of retaining Your Excellency's tried ser-

vices, but answered that I ventured to predict, in face of all commands, Your Excellency's resignation, unless His Majesty preserved some moderation in his expressions. I also drew His Majesty's attention to the fact that a sudden Chancellor-crisis in the moment of his return from a pleasure-trip could not but cause a startled Germany to lay all the blame on him. I likewise pointed out that Your Excellency could argue that the prevailing misunderstandings were caused by the necessity of the Government's taking its own course when His Majesty was away on pleasure-trips. I need not enlarge to Your Excellency on the explosion produced by this, but His Majesty graciously showed me his usual consideration on this occasion also.

"Your Excellency, after this absolutely veracious picture of the situation, will be in a position to prepare for 'things to come,' and—I venture most respectfully to make this heartfelt plea !—Your Excellency will, it is to be hoped, be able on more precise information to avoid the shoals which menace the Emperor and us all, should a storm suddenly blow up in the shape of the dreaded Chancellor-crisis."

An entry in his diary for August 15 shows the course of events :

"A letter to the Emperor, written in the Foreign Office and emphasising the risks of a Chancellor-crisis, seems to have moved His Majesty to renounce the idea of speaking too sharply to the Chancellor. H.M. telegraphed to me at Heringsdorf: 'All right'—and with that the crisis seems to be, if not averted, at any rate postponed."

It was in fact nipped in the bud. Caprivi was able to announce on August 15 :

> " The interview yesterday went off extremely well. We did not dwell on the vexed question, so that ultimately I was able to touch on the moot points in succession, and explain my motives. It was graciously received. With much respect and gratitude to Your Highness, I am, etc."

But there remained a bitter after-taste, and the cup prepared by the Chancellor pleased the Emperor's palate less and less. A further difficulty was added by the Emperor's increasing annoyance with Marschall. His confidence in Marschall had even in the beginning of 1894 been so shaken that, as Eulenburg wrote to Bülow, " We cannot count on their getting on together much longer. Shall we manage to pull Marschall through the winter ? Only the Olympians can tell ! "

But worse than all were the ever more embittered conflicts between the Imperial Chancellor and the Foreign Office on the one side, and the Prussian Ministry on the other. In these the moving spirit was the Finance Minister, Miquel. He was intriguing with transcendent duplicity to be made Imperial Chancellor and Prime Minister. Besides this, Eulenburg found that the estrangement between Emperor, Chancellor, and Secretary of State was even then so marked that in a circumstantial memorandum drawn-up for his own better comprehension he came to the conclusion that he must seriously contemplate the retirement of Caprivi and Marschall. Should this come to pass, he saw in Botho Eulenburg the future Chancellor, in Bülow the plainly-indicated Secretary of State.

The issue was to be otherwise. The assassination

of President Carnot on June 25, 1894, had had an overwhelming effect on the Emperor; he demanded some vigorous measure against the revolutionary movement. This question absorbed him during the Norwegian cruise in July. The upshot of a long talk between him and the two representatives of the Government who accompanied him, Eulenburg and Kiderlen, was that a cipher telegram was despatched to the Prussian Prime Minister, expressing a desire for stronger legal protection and requiring the Ministry to act in accordance. This was the beginning of the conflict about the so-called Revolution Law, to which the Imperial Chancellor and the Prime Minister were to fall victims.

These two statesmen, who had been working side by side since March, 1892, did not in general see eye to eye, but in this matter their ways soon parted once for all. Count Botho Eulenburg pronounced that stern measures in Prussia were impossible unless a similar law were promulgated throughout the whole Empire. In his opinion this should be enforced by dissolving the Reichstag —even if that had to be done more than once—and in case of extremity by an alteration in the suffrage, the same policy which Prince Bismarck had envisaged in his last period of office. Such ideas Caprivi utterly repudiated. The question was still in solution when the Emperor, in a speech at Königsberg on September 5, anticipated the decision and sounded the battle-cry: "To arms for religion, morality, and order against the parties of revolution!" He had suddenly made up his mind once for all, was even ready for a change in the Chancellorship, and in that event was convinced that the new man could only be a General. The Imperial speech was like Jason's stone for the

members of the Government—a pitched battle again, every man against every other ; no idea could be given of it without filling many pages. As usual at the end of September, Philip Eulenburg was at the Emperor's side during the shooting visit at Rominten. On August 30 he had already reported to the Emperor on the state of affairs, frankly confessing his helplessness and confining himself to weighing carefully all the possibilities.[1] In his perplexity he turned to the Grand Duke of Baden, to whom he wrote, after describing the situation :

" I am really at the end of my resources, and don't know what I am to say to H.M. when at our meeting—about September 23, at Rominten —all these questions become acute. Will Your Royal Highness graciously give me some advice ? I know *no one* else to whom I can turn. For no one else has at once the detachment and the experience possessed by Your Royal Highness— for Germany's salvation ! . . . Indubitably these questions will come up between H.M. and myself, and their scope is so wide that I am not fit to take them on myself alone. I might unwittingly sin against Emperor and Empire. The Czar's illness, which is very serious though not necessarily fatal, gives us, by his now *still more imperative* need of rest, a kind of guarantee for some time. Hence Germany might remain unmolested amid *graver* internal conflicts."

[1] In this document we find the following :

" The motto *Divide et impera*, by which Your Majesty governs, is applicable only when the Governmental factors work together as peaceably as may be in their appointed paths of usefulness for Emperor and Empire. When irreconcilable differences arise, the sovereign suffers, for the country gains an impression of insufficient solidarity and security, and makes it a reproach to him that he does not alter the conditions. Thus the soveriegn has to bear the blame."

The Grand Duke's answer did not reach him for some time. It advocated Caprivi's retirement and his replacement by Prince Chlodwig Hohenlohe, whom Philip Eulenburg himself was to supplement as Vice-Chancellor.

Eulenburg arrived at Rominten on September 25, to find a serious situation—Caprivi ready to go if anything more was undertaken than a slightly stricter enforcement of the common law ; Botho Eulenburg resolved on a similar step if the proposed measures were not of a vigorous nature, corresponding to the portentous declaration in the Imperial speech ; the Emperor insistent on a marked challenge and not disinclined to appoint the Prime Minister in Caprivi's place.

Philip Eulenburg once more thought it the best plan to work for an understanding between the parties, so that the impending campaign against revolution, from which the Emperor was not to be dissuaded, should not be inaugurated by a Governmental crisis. But he quite missed fire with the Emperor, who avowedly desired a decisive issue. An excellent memorandum in which Eulenburg stated the pros and cons for an open conflict did find unreserved favour with Holstein (" a splendid piece of work ") but had no effect whatever upon the Emperor. The Caprivi question, indeed, became still more acute, for the discussions revealed that he had not laid before the Emperor documents of the greatest importance—declarations from the three kingdoms that they were ready to support resolute proceedings ; and this because they did not suit the Chancellor's own views. The Emperor exclaimed indignantly : " I have been systematically kept in the dark, in the most frivolous manner, by Marschall and the Imperial Chancellor ! I am well enough used to it, but this is the

limit!" The days of both men, so clumsily shuffling to their doom, seemed numbered.

Things were in this state when Emperor and Chancellor met again at Hubertusstock on October 5. The accounts of their interview are very discrepant, almost contradictory. Certainly Caprivi did not flatter himself that he had won the sovereign over, but did think that he was on the way to an understanding. He had no idea of the impression he had really made. For the Emperor was incensed by his demeanour and expressions of opinion, and said to Eulenburg when he saw him again on October 10: "Do tell your cousin that he must hold himself in readiness." But still Eulenburg did not abandon hope. He reported to Holstein the very same day:

"Dear friend, a word in all haste. H.M. has been very much displeased by the Imperial Chancellor's demeanour at Hubertusstock, and bitterly complains of him. However, H.M. said, in a long talk with my cousin, that he would *like* to keep the Chancellor and wished to fight the business through *with him*. This is also my cousin's wish, in which he is *absolutely* sincere. I had a long talk with him about it. Everything now depends on how the detailed discussion goes, and on whether the understanding desired by Botho E. is possible. His Majesty has the impression that the Chancellor *does not want to go on with the game*. He had declared emphatically that he would not have hand, act, or part in anything which went further than an 'instalment' in the Reichstag. I have a feeling that Caprivi has once again gone the wrong way with the Emperor, and done a lot of damage! . . . H.M. said to me: 'The Chancellor probably hopes to *brow-*

beat me!' You can imagine the effect of that impression! H.M. deserves great credit for being nevertheless dispassionate still."

The diary shall tell the rest :

"Berlin, *October* 13, 1894.

"In the morning I had an appointment with Holstein and Councillor of Legation Kayser at the Hotel de Rome, where I had arranged to stay. The latter handed me a memorandum. Both are convinced of the impossibility of taking any action which would lead to a *coup d'état* after the dissolution of the Reichstag ; and tried to persuade me to renewed attempts at turning H.M. and my cousin from the path they have entered on. I said I could not do this, in view of my position with each. For as it is my conviction that I can best serve the Emperor by working despite all difficulties for a compromise between Caprivi and Botho Eulenburg, I will not sing to Holstein's tune. He does not dream that I see through his real purpose—to bring down Botho Eulenburg.

"At ten I drove with the Emperor to Friesack, where the memorial to the Elector Frederick I was unveiled. H.M. wanted me to be there, because an Eulenburg was the right hand of the Elector (Wend zu Ileburg). Botho Eulenburg had told me of the Ministerial conference yesterday, in which Caprivi spoke against a strong measure, and Botho for it. . . . The Emperor stuck to his intention of a vigorous measure. After my return to Berlin, a talk of an hour-and-a-half with Caprivi, who is tired of office and wants to go. I found it difficult to counter his arguments. He feels himself to be 'in the way.' He is conscious that he is not what it is necessary

that he should be to the Emperor. I tried to restrain him by *assuring* him that H.M. wants to act with him, and that Botho E. is really *trying* to come to an understanding with him. But the situation strikes me as very serious. . . .

"In the evening I drove with the Emperor to the Rhine. I gave him my views, which he thought reasonable. He had spoken in the afternoon to Herr von Helldorff-Bedra, who had given him some salutary hints about the parliamentary situation. This made H.M. more accessible to my representations, and he wants the Chancellor and Botho to furnish a mutual report on his return, and then he will try to unite the hostile elements—that is to say, the contrary views."

In the succeeding days Eulenburg went with the Emperor to the unveiling of a memorial at Mannheim. He seized the opportunity of enlightening the Grand Duke of Baden, and obtaining his support for his own efforts at mediation. On his return he learnt that the apparently hopeless agreement between the parties had nevertheless been achieved. A letter from Marschall on October 19 announced it, with his "most cordial thanks." On the heels of the joyful news came the bad. A letter from Holstein on the same day announced :

"One crisis is hardly over before the next begins. Waldersee and his gang have succeeded in persuading H.M. that the half battalions of the Fourth Division should be made up to full strength. Yesterday at dinner H.M. was rather cool to Caprivi, and said : 'I shall not thank you until the half battalions are made up to full strength.' You can imagine the Chancellor's

state of mind. He actually sent for me to tell me. I did my best to soothe him. But even the optimist, Marschall, is now beginning to lose heart."

The situation thus created for Eulenburg can be gathered from his answer to Holstein :

"Liebenberg, *October* 20, 1894.

"Early this morning your first letter—bad cold—consecration of a church—general inspection of said church from two to five o'clock—dinner of twenty-six persons—speech-making—and Chancellor-crisis *da capo*, conveyed portentously to me by the courier's delivery of your letter as I came out of church. Upon my word it is more than a mere mortal can endure ! I am really beside myself, sick to death of the whole thing, and yet I cannot leave the Emperor in the lurch while I have a breath in my body. So I telegraphed at once to the Grand Duke of Baden, asking if I could speak to him to-morrow —though I had just written to the Empress that I could not go to Potsdam. You see from this that I am taking things seriously."

To the Emperor he wrote at the same time that Caprivi's resignation "*at this moment*" might have the worst political consequences for His Majesty. He would be in Berlin next day, and, if wanted, could be summoned from the Foreign Office. The Emperor's telegraphic reply was : "Best thanks. Your excitement quite superfluous. He is not thinking of any such thing, and neither am I. Have just spoken to Gr. v. B. [Grand Duke of Baden]. Everything as right as can be, and the Revolution Law too. So do keep calm, and don't always take the gloomy view."

From the diary we learn that a smash was again imminent—Marschall and Holstein in despair; the Grand Duke of Baden optimistic, saying that Caprivi had promised to stay, but resolute to let him go on any pretext that would not injure the Emperor; the Emperor considering the question of a successor, and out of love with Botho as such. "Hohenlohe-Langenberg is again on the tapis, probably through the Grand Duke's influence—as in his letter to me; and also Hohenlohe-Schillingsfurst, the Stadtholder.

"I went to the theatre at eight o'clock, to offer my birthday greetings to the Empress, as I cannot be at Potsdam on the 22nd. The Emperor, Empress, Prince Henry, and the Grand Duke in the box. I sat down, was clutched at by the Emperor, and supped with them all in the foyer. The Emperor—on account of the other Royalties—touched very casually on the situation, declaring that my last letter had drawn too gloomy a picture. Everything was all right! I could only say hurriedly: 'Your Majesty is mistaken. The fresh crisis is in being at this moment.'

"After the theatre another supper at Marschall's. Holstein there. Utter despair. *Finis Germaniae.* I let the stream of laments flow over me, the convulsions of an era which is drawing to an end—an era of inexpressible strain and stress, under an Emperor who, younger than his years, striding towards abysses, takes policy into *his own* hands—while the great relegated statesman defies him! One day perhaps all this will be realised. At present no one is dispassionate enough to do so."

On October 23, Caprivi sent in his resignation, which at first was refused. The following letter from Holstein to Kiderlen, on the same day, gives an account of this:

"On the Chancellor's attempt at resignation he at first received a telegram from H.M. saying that H.M. refused to accept it. Afterwards H.M. himself arrived and represented in convincing fashion to the Chancellor what evils would ensue upon his going—destruction of the revolutionary and financial measures, frightful confusion in foreign politics, and so forth. H.M. said he was wholly on the Chancellor's side, had perfect confidence in him, and authorised him to send the text of his letter of resignation to Count Eulenburg."

Then came the critical days from October 23 to 25, when the Emperor was shooting at Liebenberg. We turn to the diary, omitting a few references to unimportant details :

"Towards evening on the 23rd the Emperor arrived at Löwenberg, where I met him at the station. Getting out of the train, he said to me : 'I bring the joyous news of the end of our ninth crisis!' I doubted the 'end,' and feared all sorts of disaster. . . . The poor Emperor, light-hearted and relieved by the political truce, and (as always here) feeling that he might be himself, enjoyed the evening in our usual circle with music and all sorts of enlivening talk. I was extremely wretched, brooding like a bird of ill-omen over my thoughts. On the 24th there appeared, after a short interrogation of the Emperor, my cousin Botho [the Prime Minister] from Berlin. We were already in the butts. The first morning's sport was over and we were at luncheon, which was served in a tent under the old fir-trees on the northern edge of the Häsener beech-grove, nearly opposite 'Voigt's Fairy King' and close to the pond with its en-

circling old lindens and oaks. Cousin Botho was in grey shooting-dress. The Emperor, who had just finished lunch, rose to welcome him, as did all present. Then he went off alone with Botho between the tall firs and old junipers, eagerly gesticulating as they walked up and down. This lasted quite an hour. The whole shooting-party, sitting over the remains of luncheon, kept up a pretence of conversation. Everyone was squinting at the Emperor and Botho, and aware that something extraordinary was going on. For Botho had looked very much worried when he arrived. At last the dialogue came to an end, and the Emperor came up to me with that pale, pinched look so familiar to me from all the innumerable bad hours we have been through together. I asked him whether the shoot might be resumed, and went with him to his butt. The weather was overcast, everything looked dismal.

"Just imagine, your cousin has just asked me to let him resign!" began the poor Emperor, to whom this turn of events came as a complete surprise. I felt immensely sorry for him. I could not help saying that the collapse of the Caprivi era must necessarily result from Botho's going. For the Emperor could not continue to govern with either Caprivi or Botho alone. I have seldom seen him so cast-down.

"'Do you think there is any chance of another reconciliation if I were to impress upon both that if one goes the other must go with him?' he asked me. I could not honestly say anything but 'No.' And the more since hearing H.M.'s account of Caprivi's having said that the gulf between himself and Botho was not to be bridged. It was out of the question that Botho should

remain in the Ministry any longer. But Caprivi's fate too was sealed by that. What was to be done?

"'Whom can you suggest?' asked His Majesty. 'I have no idea whom I could call upon. Don't you know anyone?' he asked again. 'A man,' I answered, 'who is neither conservative nor liberal, neither ultramontane nor progressive, neither ritualist nor atheist, is hard to find.'

"'A kind of freak that never existed,' remarked His Majesty.

"'When,' continued I, 'I some time ago discussed the possibility of a change with the Grand Duke of Baden, he mentioned the Stadtholder Hohenlohe as a stop-gap while another man was sought for. Hohenlohe is a Catholic, but by no means ultramontane. More of a liberal than a conservative. Caprivi does not know the South Germans; Hohenlohe does not know the North.'

"'I'm on the spot for this,' said H.M.

"People like a change,' I went on. 'Hohenlohe will be that—"something different," that anyhow no one can abuse, if that is conceivable in Prussia. It is true that Bismarck, in one of the many conflicts when he wanted to go, named Franckenstein as his successor. I don't believe he had the slightest idea that the old Emperor would fall in with it; besides, he was always certain that he himself would *not* go.'

"'I'll write to Hohenlohe as soon as I've spoken to Caprivi, for of course there can be no talk of his staying without your cousin. He'll see that well enough. I'm not going to be such a fool as to set every ultramontane and conservative in all Germany at my throat!'

"We talked during the whole *battue*, and of course in French on account of the loaders standing behind us. The sows that were coming up to the guns of course got away.

"The whole Liebenberg visit, which lasted till the evening of the 25th, was a kind of tormented play-acting for the Emperor and me. And all the guests, who honestly tried to amuse His Majesty, were consumed with curiosity; it was like a bone in their throats, and prevented them from being at ease. Nevertheless we had quite a lot of fun, for His Majesty's temperament has a happy knack of oblivion."

Eulenburg had lost hope, though the Emperor departed on the evening of the 25th with the intention of bringing about a reconciliation between Chancellor and Prime Minister in spite of all. The pessimism was justified. The very next day he had a telegram from his cousin the Lord Chamberlain: "Both go. The word is Chlodwig." What had happened will be best displayed by a letter to Bülow, which gives a detailed account.

"Liebenberg, *November* 1, 1894.

"DEAR BERNARD,

"A cold with high fever—probably the result of the excessive mental and physical strain of the last fortnight—has laid me on my back, but the first occupation of my convalescence must be to give you the following account of the crisis. The newspapers are pretty well in the dark, and even the initiated scarcely have *le mot de l'énigme*. I almost think that I alone am in a position to lift the veil completely. Circumstances (alas!) enable me to see deeper than most people, and my repugnance for the devil-dance of human passions and ambitions causes me to take a

detached view, which I have occasionally been able to use to my beloved Emperor's advantage.

"His Majesty was more weary of the self-willed old General-and-Chancellor than was known to the world at large. But it *was* known to the Emperor's suite, and with the tenacity of personal dislike they combined against a personality which in four-and-a-half years has *not contrived to make a single friend at Court.* (General von Plessen, who is from of old devoted to Caprivi, has himself no great standing, and superintended the Chancellor's interests with a sort of virginal timidity.) Caprivi's abandonment of the three years' service, his unbending attitude towards the Conservative party and the wishes of the landlords stimulated the hatred of the Emperor's military surroundings to the verge of insanity.

"A keen sense of his isolation drove the old Chancellor more definitely into the arms of those who *did* stand by him than in ordinary circumstances would have been possible. And these men, again, were fighting for their own hands, while *holding* the Chancellor to the course which had delivered him up to them. Thus it came about that officials, who were at heart conservative or at any rate moderately so, had joined the most extreme left wing, were reckoning on the democratising Centre Party, and would say without turning a hair that 'in certain circumstances one can count on the votes of the Social Democrats.'

"These were Göring, Marschall, Holstein, Fischer, etc.—in fact the whole Foreign Office; and it helped matters little that these gentlemen were, again, at violent odds with one another.

"However, I don't want to condemn entirely this 'cabal' in favour of Caprivi. It originated

in a moral idea, which will be appreciated only when the history of this singular period comes to be written—namely, the idea of showing Europe that the Emperor's Government, after Bismarck's retirement, and *in spite* of Bismarck, was strong and capable of carrying on. I myself have contended for this idea, which is a good Prussian one, and ruined my nerves by so doing. But I thought the case proved when Caprivi had held out—or rather, *been enabled* to hold out—for something like three years. Herbert Bismarck and Count Waldersee had in March, 1890, been ready to pledge me their word that Caprivi would last *at most three months*. But when three years had gone by, I did silently indulge myself with the hope of different combinations in the future.

"That dangerous 'left turn' gave not only the Emperor's environment but the Prussian Ministry cause for serious reflection. The Prussian Ministry *could* not widen the breach with the Conservatives in Caprivi's belligerent fashion. The press-campaign began and the Emperor openly sided against the publicity department of the Foreign Office. That went on for months. Then H.M. made the Königsberg speech, turned towards Botho Eulenburg, and proposed in that way to regain the confidence of the wounded Conservative party. 'I want to *keep* Caprivi,' he often said to me. 'He doesn't win people over unless I take a hand. That's the way he ought to look at it—but I can't make him!'

"This action of the Emperor's was the beginning of the end of the Caprivi régime. The Revolution Law was merely the ostensible pretext. On the basis of this projected measure terrible con-

flicts began, I had endless trouble to face, and if an understanding had been desired—well, an understanding could ultimately have been come to. But, as I have said, the obstacles lay deeper.

" 1. H.M. had turned towards the Conservatives. Botho Eulenburg was in H.M.'s opinion a moderate, excellent type of conservative.

" 2. H.M. had a crow to pick with Caprivi. Two rather inexplicable occurrences—possibly misunderstandings—cast a sinister light on the old gentleman. Moreover, the unworthy press-attacks against Miquel and the Ministry were for some time attributed to him by H.M., and very definitely so. These two matters caused *both* sides to see things in the wrong light.

" Number 1 was the source of a dead set against Botho Eulenburg, instituted by the Foreign Office with the avowed intention of bringing him down—of a trial of strength between Caprivi and Botho, because the Office (after the Königsberg speech, and when it became known that Caprivi was for mild measures against revolution) said to itself: ' His Majesty is not in a position to let Caprivi go, for the odium of a policy of force will fall upon the Emperor, while Caprivi will make *une belle sortie*.' The gentlemen concealed their game from me, but I saw through it, and uttered fruitless warnings. The press was used to such an extent, the old Chancellor made so stubborn, that the hour was *inevitable* when the Emperor would have to decide whether he would keep Caprivi at Botho Eulenburg's expense, or himself be impaled on the horns of the dilemma and appear as an Emperor inclined to a policy of force. There was the trouble. For Number 2 had had a profound effect on His Majesty.

" But now, knowing this view of the Emperor's, the opposition party made the mistake of thinking the moment had come—without a thought of the danger caused by the Königsberg speech and the projected sensational measure—for bringing Caprivi down. For in these gentlemen's opinion the Emperor could do nothing else but decide for one of the two men, if the breach should come—and the balance, as was known, weighed heavily against Caprivi in the Emperor's feeling.

" The logical outcome of this situation could only be as follows : Caprivi, profoundly embittered by his sense of the Emperor's attitude, drew his own conclusions from H.M.'s behaviour to him at the Flag ceremony (when the Emperor drank his health *after* that of several other Generals and remarked as he did so : ' I shall not thank you until the half battalions are full battalions ! '), as well as from the Emperor's speech and the reception of the deputation from the Landlords' League. The cup was full.

" But his supporters, instead of soothing him down, persuaded him to send in his resignation, for (in their folly) they thought the ' right ' moment had come, the moment which *must* produce a decision in the Chancellor's favour. Göring was chiefly responsible for this mistake.

" And so when the Emperor, seeing the situation rightly, went to Caprivi and begged him to stay, at the same time assuring him of his perfect confidence with regard to the important issues, these supporters held the battle to be won and exploited the position to the utmost in the press. The result of the interview with H.M. was represented as ' slaughter ' and the ' victim '—Botho E.—as simply ' done in.' Caprivi himself dictated an article in the *Kölnische Zeitung*.

"This foolish orgy of the supposititious victor inevitably—given the deeper issues—brought about a totally unforeseen result.

"The Emperor, who immediately after his interview with Caprivi started for Liebenberg and greeted me at Löwenberg station with the words: 'I announce the successful issue of the *ninth* Chancellor crisis!', believed in the definitive relegation of the Ministerial disputes and the definitive pacification of the Chancellor. He was therefore very disagreeably surprised when Botho E., whom *He* summoned to Liebenberg, handed in his resignation on the ground that his knowledge of what had occurred at Caprivi's farewell interview (which H.M. had bidden the Chancellor impart to Botho E., so that he might know where he stood) obliged him to take that step, for there had been mention of an 'unbridgeable gulf' between him and the Chancellor. H.M. was distraught, and reproached himself for having overlooked this difficulty. He most earnestly begged Botho E. to remain and thus control the situation, and I too was bidden to speak urgently to my cousin.

"It was perfectly evident to me that the game was up. Not because of Botho's resignation, but because of the effect which the Imperial expression of confidence in Caprivi was bound to have. I knew the Foreign Office too well—and too well the hold which the press had over the Imperial Chancellor's officials.

"On the evening of the 24th, Botho E., in truly dignified and loyal fashion, declared himself ready to stay if Caprivi would but expressly say or write that he 'desired Botho's continuance in office, and would be willing to go on working with him as a friend and colleague.'

" The Emperor said to me : ' That is a condition to which the Chancellor is bound to accede. It is a minimum in which a gentleman cannot but acquiesce if he is desirous to serve and assist me and the Fatherland.'

" I replied that Count Caprivi would not do this, because while *we* were behaving like peacefully-minded people in the peaceful forest, in Berlin the press was undoubtedly getting up a frantic agitation, which would render even the mildest form of explanation an impossibility for Caprivi.

" The Emperor looked very grave and said that if Caprivi would not acquiesce, he must go. ' I owe that to your cousin.'

" On my repeating what I had said, and adding that the bridges were broken and that H.M. would be faced by a serious dilemma if he *insisted* that Caprivi should give even the barest of assurances, the Emperor discussed with me the eventuality of a change in the Chancellorship, and the Stadtholder Hohenlohe emerged as the *sole* conceivable candidate.

" When we parted at the Löwenberg station on October 25, the Emperor's last words to me were : ' Well, if it *must* be, it must—for better an end with a fright than a fright without an end ! '

" There spoke the secret differences of opinion which separated H.M. from Caprivi, and brought the crisis to a head.

" No sooner had the Emperor reached Gesundbrunnen than (as Kuno Moltke told me) he saw in the newspaper cuttings the confirmation of my prophecy that the press would be let loose. As he read, he vehemently exclaimed : ' My private conversation with Caprivi is in the paper ! ' That was the end. Even on the railway journey

it became clear to H.M. that after such an unleashing of the press there could be no question of a recall—and the following afternoon put the finishing touch.

"So it came about that both the opposition parties were unutterably astonished when neither the one nor the other saw their man at the helm, but the Stadtholder moving on the face of the waters!

"To no one had the most obvious of solutions occurred—namely, that if the Emperor was driven into a corner, the only thing he could do was to part with both statesmen."

Caprivi's retirement was the beginning of a series of critical moments within the Government, of which only a few were known to the public, and scarcely any in their true bearings. Indeed, the first three years of Prince Hohenlohe's Chancellorship might be described as a period of chronic Governmental crises. The earliest was connected with the personality of the Prussian Minister of the Interior, von Köller.

Köller showed himself inclined to further the Emperor's wish for more rigorous measures in Prussia, regardless of the Reichstag. Prince Hohenlohe did not share this view; and even in the Prussian Ministry Köller, for different reasons, found himself isolated, the other Ministers having declared that they could no longer work with him.

The Emperor, on this, felt deeply wounded, even insulted. He looked upon Köller as his right hand, the "strong man" on whom he could rely in serious difficulties. He thought the attitude of the other Ministers unfitting. The early days of December found him at boiling-point. The question arose whether he should acquiesce in

Köller's fall, or accept the resignation of the entire Ministry of State with the Chancellor at its head.

Philip Eulenburg was as usual deeply involved in these troubles. He shared Hohenlohe's view. "Either," he wrote to Bülow, "there must be a really adequate Socialist measure, or no mention whatever must be made of a question which will raise such endless dust." But his endeavours (during the Rominten sojourn at the end of September, 1895) to calm down the Emperor were fruitless. After he had laid before His Majesty a memorandum from Marschall he wrote resignedly (October 1): "With this last attempt I have come to the end of my resources, so it amounts to this—we must choose the least of all the evils, and implore the good God that He may bless the decision in some way that we cannot foresee."

When the conflict between Köller and the other Ministers first declared itself, he wrote to the Emperor (November 29, 1895) from Meran, whither he had hastened to his mother's sick-bed:

"May I—as so often before—frankly and honestly express my opinion to Your Majesty?

"As things stand, Your Majesty is placed between these alternatives: The Imperial Chancellor and the whole Ministry, or Köller alone.

"Köller—though I fully appreciate his sentiments—does not carry sufficient weight to allow his personality to cause an extremely complicated European situation, which would disturb the entire continent, and stamp Your Majesty as fickle and self-willed.

"I do not for a moment doubt that Your Majesty will see your way out of the dilemma. . . . I can assure you on my duty and conscience that even in Conservative circles Köller

does not possess the influence which Your Majesty attributes to him.

"Nowadays there is nothing to be done by *mere* bluff. *Intelligence* is equally essential. I dislike saying this—but at such a moment I must. If ever it becomes necessary to have resource to pure bluff, Your Majesty will always be able to rely on Köller. His part is not by any means *played out*. But—at this moment, let there be no Chancellor-crisis, *no change of Chancellor!!* That would inevitably produce the impression for which Friedrichsruh is eagerly on the look-out: 'So this is what the Emperor has come to! *Now* for the Chancellor whom I, Bismarck, can manipulate, be he Waldersee, Schweinitz, or another!'

"I write these lines when all the world is asleep, and am possessed by the consciousness of my temerity, my responsibility—but also of my unbounded affection and faithful friendship, which lays on me the duty of speaking frankly and without reserve."

The Emperor, already on his way to Breslau, answered by telegraph:

"Cipher left at Potsdam. Letter received. If necessary come to Breslau. Unfortunately do not agree with contents, for things are not as you suppose.

"WILHELM. I.R."

Eulenburg swiftly decided to go to Breslau. There he found that the Emperor had indeed accepted Köller's resignation, but was all the more out of humour because he had. For the rest Eulenburg made the following memorandum for his own use:

"Breslau, *December* 3, 1895.

"At a quarter to nine this morning I was summoned by A.D.C. Count von Moltke to the Emperor, who had commissioned Moltke to inform me of His Majesty's present disposition and views. The Emperor was more and more convinced that the step taken by the Ministry was a forcing of his hand. He had evidently spoken plainly of the matter on the journey from Berlin to Breslau, but his displeasure had grown greater and greater. It is manifest that the presence of his military suite largely contributed to make him see this display of force (as undoubtedly the Ministry's proceeding might be termed) as a piece of gross 'insubordination' (!) I breakfasted with the Emperor and the two Moltkes. There the incident was treated as a *fait accompli*, and the origins were no further discussed. The Emperor told of two very remarkable things. One (of which no one in Berlin had informed me) was that the Vice-President of the Ministry of State, Bötticher, had been definitely instructed to inform the Ministry that His Majesty refused to dismiss Köller, because that Minister possessed his confidence; but that he was prepared to administer a reprimand to the Minister, before the assembled Ministry of State, for the indiscretion of which he had been guilty. Bötticher is said to have thereupon observed that it was impossible to institute a species of boycott in the Ministry of State. On this expression of the Imperial will there followed the unanimous declaration of the Ministry that Köller did not possess the confidence of his colleagues. That declaration was signed by Bötticher also. There is a hiatus here. Did Bötticher faithfully perform his commission, or

did he misunderstand the Imperial behest? The Ministry, if it did not intend to work with Köller, could give no answer to the Imperial decision but that of resignation—but it was not necessary to reply to the Emperor's statement that Köller possessed his confidence by retorting that he did *not* possess that of the Ministry, thus leaving the Emperor to do the rest. The conflict of opinion ought not to have taken the form of a Ministerial decision; properly it ought to have been discussed in a personal exchange of views between the Imperial Chancellor and the Emperor.

"There was some truth in what His Majesty said to me—that such a defiance would never have entered the head of a Prussian Minister, and that Marschall, for whom the Constitution always stands in the foreground, was behind it. The Emperor even thinks it uncertain whether the old democrat, Miquel, may not have rejoiced in getting the better of the King of Prussia. The Emperor's second striking communication was his account of the interviews which he had with Köller after the resignation was handed in. It appeared from these that Köller, in his revenge, had shockingly calumniated the State Ministry. The Emperor said indignantly that Köller had told him that 'the Ministers of State, in conformity with the prevailing principles, which would be firmly adhered to, were unable to make any report of the proceedings *even* to the Emperor.'

"I declared that I was sure this accusation was false. Such statements were against all reason and possibility. He said that the idea of a fresh Chancellor-crisis had driven him to utter despair. He had positively never been in so

terrible a position, because he felt so deeply and so painfully the affront put upon him by the proceedings of the Ministry of State ; no such personal offence had ever before been inflicted on him, and he could not understand how his uncle Hohenlohe could have lent himself to it. He had completely lost confidence in the entire Ministry. *In some way or other he would have satisfaction.* He had considered whether the Ministry must not necessarily hand in its resignation. That would make some atonement ; then if he did not accept and did let Köller go, he would be making *his* concession to wisdom.

" I told the Emperor quietly that I shared his view, and thought the Crown must have some satisfaction ; but I did not conceal from him that in my opinion the whole affair needed *explanation.* I said that I felt there had been misunderstandings. . . .

" I did not yield to the Emperor's wish that I should accompany him to Berlin. I begged him to forgive me if I asked him to let me go on leave to Bielau for shooting, and then immediately return to Vienna. I said it was to his interest that my name should not be connected with any fresh crisis. The public must not be able to prate about my influence over him. Indeed, that kind of discussion should not *on any account* be provoked."

It was to take five more days before the troubled waters were in some degree tranquillised, and (for the public at least) some peace restored by the appointment of a new Minister, von der Recke. The Ministry of State had won the battle, but it had to submit to receiving what Lucius called " a firm minute," in which " improper proceedings

were sternly rebuked and the rights of the Crown explicitly asserted." Eulenburg had done his utmost by letters and telegrams to induce those concerned to recognise the justice of the Emperor's attitude, and stop them from driving the sovereign to extremities. What he was above all desirous of was to establish and preserve the best possible understanding and contact between Emperor and Chancellor. The following letter to Holstein was, among others, designed to that end :

"Vienna, *December* 7, 1895.

"These have been and are most particularly delightful days—once again.

"That you have any nerves left is among the greatest of the puzzles that surround me. I am feeling the reaction, and especially with regard to those periods when my heart and sense of friendship were too powerfully appealed to, as was recently the case in Breslau. Once for all, I am personally very fond of His Majesty—and to see a man who is truly enshrined in one's heart undergoing tribulation is not the sort of thing I care for. Nor do you—for under your mask of the ruthless statesman, 'there leap the flames of genuine humanity.'

"Now, H.M. did suffer *very severely*, and my intercourse with him bore the character of an outpouring from a tormented soul. That is why I have so pressingly besought the Prince to do justice to our sovereign's wounded feeling, and I am glad to say that the dear old gentleman, and you too, have quite understood my motive.

"As to the form taken by this recognition, it does not really signify. That which I suggested was, moreover, not my own, but His Most Gracious Majesty's. If it was moderate in tone,

that was *His* doing. True, I had to fight hard, for H.M. first wanted the resignation to be a public affair. I dissuaded him from that—but as to the rest I was in full agreement with him, because after all people *cannot* inflict further suffering on their King when he has yielded his point! Besides I thought it, considering the relations between him and the Ministry, which were very uncomfortable, a fitting moment in which to give His Majesty some sign of human sympathy.

"I thank you cordially for your exhaustive information. It has enabled me to survey the position and avoid mistakes. My principal aim could only be to bring Emperor and Chancellor into renewed contact with one another. In my letters to both—apart from my verbal intercourse with H.M. at Breslau—I have made suggestions which will, I hope, have some effect. They are based on my knowledge of both characters. I have kept no copies. The rush was so frantic that I could scarcely read over what I wrote.

"What I think for the moment most important—I have wired and written to Hohenlohe about it—is the avoidance of any impression that the Ministry wants to *exploit its victory*. If that happens the situation is hopeless.

"Since H.M. is fully persuaded that he has shown, *beyond the limits* of what a self-respecting Prussian King can do, how impossible a fresh change in the Chancellorship seems to him, his susceptibility must be spared to the utmost in that respect. *If this is done*, the further functioning of all factors will naturally ensue, precisely *because* it is known how firmly H.M. is resolved to keep Hohenlohe as Imperial Chancellor. The Ministry must realise that it is *only for the Chancel-*

lor's sake that His Majesty has shown himself conciliatory. It must cultivate the sense that *therefore* the Chancellor's report will suffice to eliminate this or that disaffected element.

"But to attain this end it is very necessary that His Majesty should never feel himself bested by the Ministry as a whole; but that he should be shown, *in a tête-a-tête interview*, what is the resolute uncompromising purpose of the Chancellor. The Chancellor cannot again say to him: 'I stand here as representative of the Ministry of State, which has irrevocably decided, and so forth'; but must say, 'My unalterable opinion is . . . etc.'

"The latter formula, phrased in the Prince's tactful fashion, will have the same effect, and *will spare the King of Prussia*.

"I believe you will see that I am right, and I hope that the Prince will decide to play that part."

Eulenburg's endeavours were fully recognised by the Imperial Chancellor, who wrote to him on December 9:

"I avail myself of the outgoing courier to thank you for your letter of the 6th. I recognise therein your well-tested loyalty to the Emperor, and that everything you say to me on the necessity of obliterating the bad impressions left upon His Majesty by the recent crisis is spoken from your soul."

Of the impression made upon himself by those days, we can judge from this cry in a letter to Bülow: "I am fed-up, tired, sick with disgust."

III

HOLSTEIN

FROM the Köller crisis one fact had for the first time sharply emerged—namely, that there was no sort of unity in the Government. There had been something hitherto to desire in that respect; but with Caprivi's retirement unity seemed to have been completely lost. Conflict between Monarch and Ministry; conflict between Ministers—the mediator's task was harder than ever. For Eulenburg it was the more arduous because the man whom we earlier recognised as the dominating intelligence of the Secret Directory, and who now represented as well the most powerful influence within the Government—Holstein, in short—had for some time regarded him with distrust, and even enmity. This is therefore the place to show, by means of the correspondence we have at hand, how their former friendship had gradually been transformed to its contrary.

Not even to-day are Holstein's temper and character fully revealed to us. Those who have expressed their views of him agree in this—that with rare intellectual gifts and many good qualities, he was yet at bottom a subject for the pathologist. The inward contradictions were so extensive that a trustworthy witness, who knew him well, testifies on the one hand to his pure devotion to the State, and on the other actually furnishes an instance of this selfless servant of the State's being capable of committing, for revenge, a deed which is not far

removed from naked treason.[1] It is beyond our province to attempt such a study of Holstein's personality as might reconcile these contradictions; that, supposing it to be possible, is a task for the psychiatrist. Here we can do no more than furnish materials for a just estimate of this man, in whom are incarnated the destinies of Germany, the Emperor, and the Emperor's friend.

We know how the personal relations between Holstein and Eulenburg were begun. Eulenburg from the first felt some distrust of the enigmatic being. "Much circumspection, with a tendency to intrigue"—so he summarised his earliest impression in a letter to Bülow of February, 1887. Gradually his sympathy increased, a feeling which was probably composed of pity and admiration. On Holstein's side reliance increased in corresponding measure. In the earlier years he was surprisingly frank toward his younger friend. He gladly recognised Eulenburg's disinterestedness. "You can't complain of the degree of confidence shown you by an old pessimist. It is because I know that with you the cause comes before the person" (October 31, 1890). Gradually ensued a genuine personal friendship.

"Dear Eulenburg, please drop these complex forms of address—two such faithful comrades as we must not stand on vain ceremonies" (October 20, 1891). The misanthrope found astonishingly tender phrases in which to send Christmas greetings to his friend. Thus he writes in 1891:

> "Dear friend, I do not think you will find fault with me for thinking so much of you at this festival, amid all my work. For an old bachelor

[1] Hammann, *Bilder aus der letzter Kaiserzeit*, p. 40, where there is a reminder that even Bismarck feared Holstein's vengeful treacheries. The reader will learn of another instance of treachery.

it was an unwonted task to hunt up some offerings for your little people. I shall never know whether I have found the right things, for you will never tell me whether, for example, the son and heir is already too much of a man for a pig-market. Well, we must hope for the best."

How highly Holstein estimated Eulenburg's literary talents we already know. And Eulenburg responded warmly and sincerely to such interest. On December 25, 1890, he writes :

"To-day will be a marked one in my life. With Mussigny's incomparable and never-fading crimson-lake I paint in my heart your name, first known to me some years ago as that of a peculiar, unapproachable personage, never likely to unveil to a young Secretary of Legation who was more occupied with poetry than with diplomacy ; but who subsequently to my amazement, and at first not without a certain misgiving on my part, entered into relations with me—and now is lauded by my children as a beneficent 'uncle' who gives them splendid books, and toys from Solkasch's. So there is a destiny in all things ; and I am heartily grateful to the Giver of all good for having won you to myself. I cannot now imagine what my life would be like without you. Not only the political life that I have got into I know not how, but the private too."

Mutual confidence seems to be the mark of both men's relations in these years. For the Ambassador too Holstein, as we have seen, was full of unrestrained admiration. He was lavish of such expressions as "masterly," "brilliant achievement," "diplomatic capacity of the first order," and so

forth. In this we must assign something to the conviction that he could use his junior colleague as he willed to draw Emperor and Empire out of an attitude of reserve. There he certainly deceived himself a little. It is true that in most instances Eulenburg did what Holstein advised or wished, but he was far from yielding himself up as a tool without will or judgment. From that he was warned off by the mystery with which Holstein surrounded their intercourse, and still more by the exactions which he occasionally sought to impose. When he first approached Eulenburg, the latter's Chief, Count Werthern, was to know nothing about it. When Rantzau replaced Werthern, it was to be the same with him. " I write to Starnberg, because for your sake [?] I wish that your present Chief should not see my handwriting " (June 21, 1888).

Holstein was wont to demand blind obedience from his friends ; if he was somebody's enemy, they too must decline intercourse with that somebody. At the time of his most embittered feud with Waldersee, on January 10, 1891, he wrote to Eulenburg : " If I may venture to advise you, do not visit Waldersee ; it is *due to your dignity*, after he has declared all diplomacy to be useless and mentally bankrupt." However, he did not succeed in this. Eulenburg wrote on the margin of the letter : " I will *never* sacrifice friendly relations to political differences ! "

How far his exactions could go would be hardly credible if it were not in black and white. In February, 1892, sending a minute of the Imperial Chancellor's about an interview with the Bavarian Ambassador, he pointed out to Eulenburg that the contents had better be conveyed in an altered form to Crailsheim. Nor was that enough ; he actually wrote Eulenburg's answer to the Chancellor for him :

"As to the answer, I would not go into details —at any rate not into all details in their regular order; but *in nuce* would say that in view of the markedly calmer attitude and proceedings in Berlin, Crailsheim too is more at ease and looks to the issue without any fear that a greater crisis will develop therefrom. It is for you to clothe this skeleton of an idea in garments of detail. Avoid polemics as far as possible; rather seek to bring discussion to an end."

All this achieved was to arouse the recipient's anger; he made a note: "Directly a situation becomes ticklish, Holstein goes stark staring mad! The idea that I am to be told what Crailsheim is to be *said* to have said to me is positively grotesque. This letter may be preserved as a curiosity; to act upon it would be craven. I am no Holstein, but an Eulenburg."

In another month the situation repeated itself. On March 17, Holstein dictated what Eulenburg was to report to the Emperor about a letter from von Helldorff, which had never arrived at all! In the summer of 1894 he urged Eulenburg to restrict his official reports, and instead inform Holstein by private letter of everything he ought to know. The pretext was that Caprivi felt slightly offended by information "given to the bureaux"; so that letters were better adapted to make things go smoothly. Eulenburg commented on this: "Thus letting me in for the Imperial Chancellor's displeasure! If poor Caprivi got hold of this letter, friend Holstein's days would certainly be numbered! But since we cannot—I had almost written, alas!—do without him, I shall pay no attention to this hint, nor shall I show the note to good Caprivi. My God! What a drama!"

When these words were written, a rift had occurred in the former confidential relation.

The first evident displeasure on Holstein's part showed itself on and after Bismarck's reception by the Emperor in January, 1894. That Eulenburg had not sought by every means to frustrate this step, but had even contributed towards it and welcomed it as a happy event, was what Holstein could not put up with. He regarded it as a personal grievance. His first letter after the incident was grumpy; and Eulenburg made a note: "Smothered rage! If I were not what I am friend Holstein would throw me overboard!" But the fact was that it had become Holstein's craze to scent the Bismarck peril in everything and anything. It is well-nigh laughable to see how he contrived to trace everything back to that, and how he accumulated fodder for his hatred. Without exaggeration it may be said that so long as Bismarck lived Holstein beheld all things, small or great, from one angle of vision—was there a shadow of danger from the Bismarck quarter? His terror sometimes took unmistakably the form of persecution-mania. From the following instances we can judge what the effect even of a merely ostensible reconciliation between the Emperor and Bismarck was sure to be upon him.

On February 8, 1894—that is to say, about a fortnight after the event—he declared he had heard of the Emperor's sending Bismarck a key to the official cipher; but *he* was not to be mentioned as having spread the tidings. Eulenburg merely commented: "No! For probably it is a 'conjecture' of Holstein's own." And then actually ensued the Emperor's return visit to Friedrichsruh! When the Imperial couple's trip to Abbazia was arranged about the same time, Holstein fell into

a state of the direst terror, because . . . because Abbazia is near Fiume, where dwelt the Hoyos family, so that a meeting with Herbert Bismarck[1] was on the cards. "Considering His Majesty's idiosyncrasies, a week's intercourse might lead to anything." Therefore it was essential to find another destination for the Emperor, say San Remo or Leghorn. The letter bears no signature—always a sign of peculiar excitement. Eulenburg wrote underneath : "This is sheer insanity. Holstein is often like the giant in Tom Thumb who was for ever saying : 'I scent human flesh !' . . . My God ! What tormenting anxiety about a Fata Morgana !"

The attacks by *Kladderadatsch* put Holstein in a continuous rage which deprived him of any rational outlook. He was furious because no one could succeed in unmasking the perpetrator and those who stood behind him. Finally his anger was assuaged by accusing Count Guido Henckel (later Prince), and he wanted to force the Count to fight a duel. Henckel rightly refused to be shot at for an affair with which he had no concern, and all reasonable people were on his side. Thereupon Holstein demanded in all seriousness that the Emperor should put pressure on Henckel to abide the verdict of the pistol, and he insisted that Eulenburg should work in that sense upon His Majesty. At the time of Holstein's letter to Henckel Eulenburg had already commented :

> "I begin to be seriously uneasy about Holstein. That letter is positively pathological, the end of it inconceivable. . . . As the world goes nowadays, everyone would think it perfectly natural that neither Herbert nor Henckel should shoot,

[1] Whose wife was a Countess Hoyos.

and also a matter of complete indifference that a crazy creature like Holstein should write abusive letters behind their backs. I warned Holstein against threatening any other persons, for people will begin to think such behaviour a proof of insanity. He listened, and made no reply. When afterwards I told His Majesty, he (still under the influence of the blood-thirsty Plessen's suggestions) thought it 'queer,' but it made no particular impression on him. I made more of an effect with my remark, when H.M. at Abbazia was abusing the Pope for some reason or other, that he should commission Plessen to challenge His Holiness. I grant that it was rather temerarious of me, but the Emperor only went into fits of laughter. What I really meant he very well knew."

When Holstein encroached still further, saying : "This time, dear friend, I am reckoning very confidently on your friendship. If H.M. does nothing against Henckel, he ranges himself with my enemies"—Eulenburg, who was then with the Emperor at Abbazia, wrote down the following serious reflections : "Any taking of sides by the Emperor involves Him in the duel question. Holstein does not see that, because he never himself knows any moderation when a 'hate' is dawning in his mind, or when he feels or has imagined any inconsistency in himself. Now we must face the risk of his getting up a hate for the Emperor, if H.M. does not espouse his cause against Henckel. A Holstein hate for H.M. would however lead to very serious consequences. So once more I am confronted with tasks which are almost beyond human power. And all the while tennis, and again tennis, and yachting and all the rubbish that

goes on on board. What a farce it is ! How is one to lend a helping hand—and where? If only I had three heads and one heart, instead of three hearts and a solitary head ! "

The tedious duel business was near putting Eulenburg himself in a most horrible hole. He had received confidential disclosures from a respected journalist, and these he imparted to Holstein for his enlightenment. But Holstein flew into another rage and wanted to challenge the journalist too. Eulenburg warned him of the consequences—a further scandal would make even his friends uneasy ; whereupon Holstein retorted : " As I perceive you are working for the Foreign Office and against me, I shall be obliged to show my claws in some way." It required a lengthy and very painful correspondence to obviate another " incident." Holstein at last allowed himself to be partly conciliated, but there remained a deep-seated grudge against the Emperor—and Eulenburg !—for having in his opinion prevented the duel and deprived him of the satisfaction due to him.

Holstein's verdicts on the Emperor would form a chapter in themselves. This faithful servant showed a remarkably keen eye for his sovereign's weaknesses. We ask ourselves why he perpetually enlarged upon them to the Emperor's best friend in the harshest and most carefully chosen terms of malignant detraction. Did he wish to preserve Eulenburg from blind idolisation of the sovereign ? That was unnecessary, as no one knew better than Holstein. He himself had repeatedly testified (in words that we have read) that Eulenburg never hesitated to tell the Emperor the whole truth. Did he wish to separate these friends ? It was his habit to alienate and embroil those who were intimately attached. With the Bismarcks he had done this,

setting Herbert against Bill, Bill against Herbert, and both against their father. In the same way he now constantly tried, by all sorts of insinuations and suspicions, to alienate Philip Eulenburg from his cousins August and Botho. His abuse of the Emperor in letters to His Majesty's bosom-friend had probably no other aim. Not that he hesitated to strike quite a different note on various occasions. The alteration was sometimes surprisingly sudden. On November 16, 1891, he had indited a long lament over the Emperor's failing prestige and his many errors. But by February 4, 1892, he was singing to this tune : " His Majesty seems to me to be shaping well politically. Yesterday everyone was full of praise for the way he conducted the conversation after dinner at the Imperial Chancellor's." Six months later the contrary note was sounded : " William II may be compared with the Emperor in Part II of *Faust*, and his fall and the rise of the German Republic predicted."

Holstein had taken a very prominent part in the crisis which led to Caprivi's fall. He saw an opportunity for getting rid of Botho Eulenburg, whom he regarded as an opponent because he himself had no influence over him ; and to that end he designed to utilise Philip Eulenburg ! His excitement was so extreme that he lost all sense of realities, and all discretion. At a moment when the Emperor had secretly decided to shake off Marschall as soon as occasion should serve, Holstein approached Eulenburg with an urgent request to make the Emperor appoint Marschall a Prussian Minister without a portfolio. By this means he hoped to strengthen Caprivi's position, and of course increase his own influence in the cabal. He could not see how impossible his suggestion was. Such was his eagerness to accom-

plish his end that he did what he had never done before—he went himself to Liebenberg and made Eulenburg walk with him for several hours in the forest, heedless of the fact that a funeral had just taken place in the household. Nor was this enough ; the very same evening he wrote an urgent letter, bidding Eulenburg go at once to the Emperor and persuade him. "Reflect that what you do will be done for the Emperor's sake, and no one's else." Eulenburg wrote under this : "Holstein's pestering is beyond endurance ! I really believe he thinks me such a fool as not to notice that he is working *for himself*, always and all the time, and tacking on Marschall's name as a blind." When Holstein learnt that the Emperor had thoroughly resolved to be rid of Caprivi, he announced his intention of leaving the service, because now Bismarck would come back ! All through, indeed, that was his one idea : Bismarck is returning. He played a decisive part in the appointment of Hohenlohe, for it was he who induced the old Prince not to refuse the Chancellorship, as he had wished to do. He exercised an extraordinary influence on this superior in the service—it was almost hypnotic, if we are to take literally the description by Prince Alexander Hohenlohe. But for all that he was not to have things all his own way. The venerable Hohenlohe, a statesman and diplomat of experience and prestige, related to the Emperor, held from the first a very different position from that of a General risen from the ranks, a solitary figure who, with no superior intellect to advise him, was never really at ease in his high office. Hohenlohe did not need Holstein ; and so he often acted, if not precisely in the opposite sense, at any rate quite independently, and not as Holstein desired.

At the very beginning of his Chancellorship he actually took the step which of all others was bound to exasperate Holstein most—he went to Friedrichsruh. In self-defence Holstein then laid plans for a general slaughter in high places. Lucanus, August Eulenburg, the President of Police—all were to go, and be replaced by more reliable men ; Philip Eulenburg, too, was to come to Berlin—" that would be the beginning of better things." Eulenburg's comment was brief and comprehensive : " Better things ? As if there could be any improvement in a witches' kitchen ! Very puerile, from a man who is otherwise so shrewd."

Holstein's anxiety and alarm found another vent in a press-agitation. He was accused by the editor of the *Kreuzzeitung* of being the instigator of all the articles which had for some time been envenoming the situation. He defended himself indignantly in a letter to Eulenburg—but omitted to sign it. As before, he meditated retirement, cleared out his room, burnt his papers. Eulenburg now thought it time to warn Hohenlohe. He enlightened him about Holstein's intrigues, which went so far as to aim at the fall (among other highly-placed officials) of August Eulenburg especially, for he frantically hated this perfectly independent man, who was, moreover, cleverer than Holstein was. Eulenburg drew the Chancellor's attention to the fact that the intrigue could be quashed if the Emperor were to learn that " a Holstein camarilla was beginning, for the purpose of getting rid of the Imperial Government." The secret hostility of the one-time friends thus declared itself. Eulenburg, in a letter to Bülow, gives his reasons : " The system pursued towards Bismarck by Hohenlohe, and supported by me, is driving Holstein to distraction. It is the old

story—love or hate. There is no medium with our friend."

The worst evil was Holstein's smothered rage whenever the Emperor, in concert with Hohenlohe and by Eulenburg's advice, did otherwise than as seemed good to Holstein. That infuriated him. He lived in a perpetual nightmare of conjectures as to the result of a possible return of Bismarck. On this ground—so little did he disguise himself from Eulenburg—he opposed the Emperor, and concocted schemes whereby it should be made impossible for him to govern personally. His perpetual importunities and pinpricks at last drove Eulenburg to make a clean breast of his own sentiments on the subject. The letter—of December 2, 1894—was written at a time when its author, as we know, had lost all his illusions as to the personality of William II, and is a confession of faith which deserves to be read in full :

Vienna, *December* 2, 1894.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"Your letter has depressed me very much—even more than my own view of things had already done. Hitherto I have kept my head above water by a certain reliance on the Emperor's good qualities. But when a man so wise as yourself croaks so persistently, I begin to lose heart—which to a sensitive nature (as mine unfortunately is) proves very distressing. That we have both survived a succession of periods which, in home politics, may be reckoned among the most strenuous that Prussia has ever known, I should like to take as almost a sign (apart from our own political vitality, to which the documents testify) that we are not *meant* to lose heart.

Anyhow, our sort of argumentations cannot fail to fortify our respective organs!

"But, surveying that strenuous epoch, I have come to a conclusion of whose value you must judge for yourself. If it is right, it may modify your view of things and your judgment of His Majesty's behaviour, and thereby contribute to a new orientation.

"It is as follows: I cannot agree that it is entirely the Bismarck fronde (which is certainly being conducted with most characteristic venom), and its corollary in the public's estimation of the Emperor's proceedings, that causes the immense and grievous dissatisfaction from which Germany now suffers. The fronde has of late lost something of its bitterness and intensity, because Friedrichsruh has lacked spiritual and material ammunition. On the other hand, the Emperor's undeniable talents (particularly evident in the military sphere) could not but be recognised as years went by, and his *conduct* has not been able to diminish that impression.

"Therefore the causes of dissatisfaction must lie deeper; not in the pressure on economic life, though that undoubtedly has something to do with it, and all the more because that sign of the times, *pleasure-seeking*, has to take second place. The *industrial prosperity* of Germany has not yet been impaired, and is actually increasing.

"The dissatisfaction, then, lies in the *political* sphere—politics are made responsible even for the agricultural distress!

"I believe that this extreme dissatisfaction has its source in the long rule of a man who was *not* the sovereign, and who so strongly impressed the Liberal—that is to say the Parliamentary—

ideal upon Prussia that the educated classes cannot now, without inward revolt, endure that a sovereign should *himself* assume the reins of Government.

" Except in the old Provinces—and even there only in part—people do not *choose* to be ruled by the hereditary sovereign, but propose to have a finger in the pie. So stands the case in Prussia. In the Empire, generally speaking, nothing but Parliamentarianism is understood. The power of the aristocracy and the upper classes was broken there quite three hundred years before it was in Prussia. Liberalism, indeed democracy, is in the people's blood, and a German Emperor who personally rules is still more inconceivable to the Empire than an autocratic King is nowadays to Prussia. Thus, in the Empire, the ruler who was *not* an Emperor did in the course of twenty years become to the Germans what a democratic historian will in days to come describe as ' the destined leader of the Germans along the path of political progress.'

" It is true that the German, and especially the Prussian, still holds fast to the idea of Emperor and King, and I do not think the Republic will easily come into being. (It would perhaps be on the cards if Bismarck were now but fifty years old—this on the Cromwellian model.) But the people intend to have a *parliamentary* Emperor and King, because they intend to have a voice in the Government.

" In Prussia the conservative opposition is based upon this ideal. Even the Pomeranian Junker, in these days, means to take part in governing, and will not suffer himself to *be* governed. Even the Pomeranian Junker thinks with tender emotion of the old Emperor, *because*

he let Bismarck govern, let him rule the Reichstag and the Landtag, without ever opposing his own will to those factors, save through the mouth of his Ministers.

" By the Constitution the King of Prussia has the right to rule autocratically. Does William II commit indiscretions? Does he promulgate decrees which overstep the limits of his rightful authority? Would the reproach of latter-day superficiality in his conduct of affairs have weight sufficient to justify an appeal against disturbance of the course of procedure? Have affairs of State ever yet been *held up* by reason of the Emperor's supineness or incapacity? These are not the points at issue—yet Germany and Prussia *will not any longer endure* the functioning of a personal Imperial will. It is melancholy to say it, but the establishment of the German Empire—that is to say, the transfusion of Liberal South German blood into Prussian veins, the amalgamation of the ruling statesman with the slumbering Barbarossa—has been the ruin of the Old-Prussian Monarchy. An autocratic sovereign, be his rights what they may, is no longer conceivable by a progressive, educated nation. Only those monarchs will be tolerated who accept the parliamentary forms of Government. The attempt to establish the rights and the position which the rule of a ' non-monarch ' consigned to oblivion, not only excites opposition, but increasingly stimulates the desire to abolish such conceptions, and introduce an explicitly parliamentary form of government—*although* parliamentarianism in its present form has gone to pot. People want precisely that—new forms, in all departments !

" If the Emperor is now assuming autocratic

authority, *he is well within his rights*—the only question being whether in the long run the consequences can be borne. And another: Who is going to win at that game? I fear that nothing but a successful war will give the Emperor the necessary prestige. In time of peace we must ask ourselves whether autocracy *can* prevail.

"Autocracy with the Liberal parties in power is illogical, because the favour in material matters shown to those parties in the political sphere is not an equivalent for their wounded self-esteem when the Imperial will asserts itself. Gifts from people who annoy us afford us no pleasure. Therefore the Liberals will *remain* disaffected—and the Conservatives too, in their character of the Opposition. Autocracy with the Conservatives ought to be possible, because it is logical. These would, so long as it suited their book, suffer the revival of tradition, and cheerfully support the autocratic sovereign, because he would be 'doing their will.' The opposition of the Liberal parties, including the Radical left wing, would however in that case take a malignant form—that is to say, revolutionary.

"His Majesty has not thought out these things. He frequently calls himself 'a modern man' and thinks that in himself he represents a form of progress. So he will not easily perceive that autocracy for a monarch is conceivable only with the Conservatives—at the price of severe conflicts. He will always want to keep in touch with the Liberal elements.

"Another form his rule might take is that of Imperialism—logical this, for the autocratic Emperor. But that would mean, if not for him, for his successor, the end of the monarchy. His Majesty would, however, never go so far.

"That His Majesty is by his very nature impelled to this attempt at restoring the system destroyed by the above-mentioned much-belauded amalgamation of the ruling statesman with the slumbering Barbarossa, is of course elementary. If we go along with him, we must envisage the cross-currents as not so much the outcome of his defects as of the sense that *battle has been joined on a cardinal issue.* But if we are conscious of our definite disagreement with the Emperor's course, we must resign our offices. For simultaneously to serve the Emperor in his character of autocratic monarch (as opposed to ruling statesman) and incessantly to feel his proceedings of that kind as minor pin-pricks, belongs to the realm of irreconcilable contradictions.

"I believe that some providential purpose is at the bottom of that elementary display of character—the Emperor's desire to incarnate the monarchy. Whether it is to destroy or to succour us, I do not know. But it goes hard with me even to admit the thought of Prussia's star in decline."

Holstein's answer (of December 4) is so petty and egotistic in conception as to be a betrayal of his nature. He began with all sorts of gossip about Bismarck's supposed intention of spending the winter in Berlin as Henckel's guest. In this he perceived "danger" for the Emperor, and insisted that "the Emperor should protect his position and person against Bismarck as well as others," for "if once the great majority of those who always want something become convinced that Bismarck can as of yore *faire la pluie et le beau temps*, they will flock to his side, and Emperor and Chancellor will be

deserted. Then (I often have my prophetic moments) will arrive the Bismarckian Hundred Days, which like the Napoleonic will end in catastrophe—at home and abroad—for Emperor and Empire, and will inevitably so impair the monarchical principle that twenty years must elapse before it can again be made valid—if then.

"On one point I share your view—that a *successful war* might have a very good effect. But on one condition only—a *just cause*, as in 1870. You will allow that in case of a war of *aggression*, we should from the moment of mobilisation have to encounter severe shocks, at any rate outside the Old-Prussian provinces. There is little prospect just now of a *defensive* war, for no one wants to do us any harm. As to governing with the Conservatives alone, I thought we had long since agreed that the *King of Prussia* possibly, but the German Emperor *in no case*, could govern in a *purely conservative* sense. And that was precisely why we both desired that there should be no anti-revolutionary measure for the Empire, but a rigorous one for Prussia. We are not to blame because it was not so. You yourself wrote to His Majesty that a conflict with South Germany might lead to a French invasion.

"Well, since neither of us desires a war and a Conservative reaction, we must see if we can't worry along with the given factor of the Reichstag. You distort my words when you say that I grudge His Majesty the reins of government. Goodness me, he might govern as they did before '48 as far as I am concerned! But I see behind that 'autocracy' the Bismarckian *guardianship* as a spectre of the near future; and the more guileless His Majesty is, the more anxious am I.

"The Bismarcks are aware that they have no

time to lose ; S.D.[1] is coming himself to direct operations."

It is plainly to be seen that Holstein felt his path diverging from that of his friend. Eulenburg stood by the Emperor, against whom Holstein had secretly declared war because His Majesty was no longer at enmity with Bismarck. On Christmas Eve Holstein despatched a letter in an elegiac strain, which can only be fully appreciated if we keep in mind what Eulenburg remarked of a similar kind of epistle : " When Holstein turns elegiac, he is in the worst of rages, perhaps at his most dangerous ! " He wrote :

" I have just received yours of yesterday, and will the less delay to thank you for it because I think that by this time next year another will be sitting in my place. For since you, as your letter of the 2nd shows, have developed from a simple Royalist into the Courtier-Conservative (latest brand) there is no one on our side to preserve the balance. The Hohenlohe régime will not, therefore, last much longer.

" August Dönhoff was here two days ago. He reproached the present Government with want of energy. The anti-socialist decree, he said, was so feeble that nothing could result from it. If Hohenlohe were to go out of office, there was no one the Emperor could summon but Botho E. From a very well-informed foreigner I hear that the Emperor's group says the same thing, and designates Botho E. as the coming man.

" These signs of the times are the cause of my sending you a box of despatches. Not to make

[1] *Seine Durchlaucht :* this was the abbreviation used in official circles for Bismarck, as later William II was generally called " S. M. " —His Majesty (*Seine Majestät*).

you change your mind. You are experienced enough in life and politics to know which way you want to go. I only wish, if possible, to persuade you—in case you go to Podiebrad—to give Hohenlohe a hint which will enlighten him on the situation, and enable him to withdraw *without undue precipitancy, and with dignity*, so as to leave the course clear for Botho's 'programme of action' and his Bismarckian supporters. We owe it to a man of Hohenlohe's fine patriotic record not to let him come to grief at the first fence, as happened with Caprivi. Besides, I am sure that Hohenlohe would be very grateful for any sort of enlightenment.

"From the other side I heard to-day that Botho E. is very much put out at coming off with a Ministerial pension of 18,000 marks. As you, in view of the possibility that Botho may become Imperial Chancellor in the course of the year, would scarcely desire the *Hausministerium*, it is perhaps indicated that Botho should be pacified by that office—*if* it is worth the temporary bother.

"Forgive my mixing myself up in matters that really don't concern me. Old habit! Hohenlohe knows nothing about your letter of December 2. So you will find him quite at his ease, and susceptible to any hint.

"Your old friend,
"HOLSTEIN."

The contrast between these two natures could not be better displayed than by the juxtaposition of this splenetic pessimism with the answer made to it by Eulenburg:

In the train between Podiebrad and Vienna.

"*December* 27, 1894.

"I received your letter just as I was starting for Podiebrad, and hasten to answer it, for I do not think it well that a man of your importance and influence should yield himself up as a prey to delusions.

"1. I beg you not to forget that my letter of December 2 was *in answer* to that in which you called the Emperor's emergence on the scene and his manner of government an Offenbachian interlude—and this in words of bitterness and irritation. I love the Emperor and am personally intimate with him—as one is with a friend. Nevertheless I have not blindly espoused his cause, but have tried to answer my other friends—yourself—in a logical and practical sense. It has been a kind of defence of my friend. Neither would *you* be silent, if anyone attacked a friend! That I am personally very fond of the Emperor, that I hold him in my heart, is what you sometimes forget; and after all it must seem well-nigh incredible that the most powerful political factor, who is to others *merely* a political factor, is to me such a purely human personality.

"From the defence of my friend, to which out of respect for H.M. and you I am obliged to give a certain form, you deduce:

"2. That with tabors and harps I have gone over to 'the Courtier-Conservatives (latest brand),' and that as a result the Hohenlohe régime is out of equilibrium. As I take it for granted that you make this assertion merely for the purpose of impressing upon me what my *true* self is, it will possibly gratify you to hear me once more say explicitly that I never could be any-

thing but a very moderate Conservative, and that the idea of a ' Courtier-Conservative ' makes me sick. The personal independence I have preserved towards Emperor, Court, and politics, no one knows better than you. What action of mine has given you the right to question it? Will you please consider my attitude in *every* political question that I have had to do with? What should have changed me? As I have said, your assertion has some purpose of its own.

" My opinion that it would be well, on the change in the Chancellorship, to approach the Conservatives, but *without holding out both hands*, has been *shared* by you. I stand to-day in precisely the same position—nor could Hohenlohe have started any differently, for H.M. had begun of his own Royal accord thus to neutralise Caprivi's sharp ' left-turn.' So Hohenlohe could not but follow the Imperial lead, and I see nothing reprehensible in his doing so.

" 3. The foreigner (I suppose Varnbüler) who informed you of the Court conjectures was quite right when he named Botho E. as future candidate for the Chancellorship. But *it is not of the smallest importance*. For years the Court has been hatching these candidate-eggs, calling them Waldersee, Bismarck, Gronsart and God knows what. And then Hohenlohe creeps out of the shell ! In future there will be *another* Hohenlohe to creep out. That is my view. I don't give a fig for the practical outcome of the high estimation in which Botho Eulenburg is held, and which is certainly shared by H.M.—and rightly, for he is a fine fellow every inch of him. As things now are, he has positively less chance of the Chancellorship than anyone else whatever. I tell you that emphatically, and I deprecate this

cabal in the limbo of Court conservatism, where Hohenlohe is not conservative enough, and where they imagine that Botho will further their interests because H.M. favours him very markedly. These people have no sense of things! The position would have to change root and branch, and that is not at the moment conceivable. If Botho were to get the Ministry of the Household I should rejoice—as you may believe; for *I*, in that position, would indeed have to tread a thorny path.

"4. It is an utter mystery to me how you can have conceived the idea of advising Hohenlohe *to go now*. Nothing more disastrous could happen for Germany, and for Prussia, than a change of Chancellorship after six months or a year. Our position abroad would be serious if it did. It is now, when we are confronted with innovations, that we need stability and Hohenlohe's European fame as we need our daily bread.

"I found the Chancellor in good spirits and very well. And of good courage too—only *very* much upset by the anonymous note which revealed the Emperor's intention of presenting him with 100,000 marks a year. In this matter he intends to take energetic police action, and look for other officials. I suppose the proceeding gave him a fright because it suggests that anonymous notes might also revive erotic matters of the past! But now farewell, dear friend, and don't be uneasy when you *really* needn't! I am very much worried about you, and distressed at your tormenting yourself. You have enough to torment yourself about. So please dismiss those superfluous phantoms."

This time even Holstein tried to rise above his

petty pre-occupations of the moment, and take a wide view. His answer of January 1, 1895, runs thus :

> " You have set forth your opinions and my (temporarily opposed) sentiments with a sense of proportion and an intellectual virtuosity which I shall not seek to emulate, being uncertain of my success therein. I must resign myself to being consumed with anxiety as I now am. We are both loyal men, but our aims are not quite similar. *You* stand near and see the single peak ; *I*, from my distance, survey the mountain-range as a whole—and the storm gathering behind it. You think of the Emperor ; I think of the dynasty as well, and do not conceal from myself that His Majesty is living on his royal capital, and that what he is heedlessly squandering now will one day be sorely needed by his son—nay, in a few years probably by himself. . . . One of the gravest omens of the imminent extinction of German Imperial sentiment lies in the fact that even *your* intelligence refuses to contemplate the issues for which the present régime is too surely preparing the ground. Kismet."

That sounds very philosophical, like the wisdom of an experienced man whose vision penetrates the future. But this letter, like the earlier one, says nothing of how in the writer's opinion the threatening dangers were to be averted—a question which must beyond all others have occupied the attention of the most influential official of the Monarchy. The answer which Holstein secretly made to himself was probably : " Let the Emperor withdraw into the background, and give me a free hand." But the reverse was what more and more proclaimed itself. Even in Caprivi's last year of office, William

II had been wont to overlook the Imperial Chancellor, and regard himself as the real Chancellor. Hohenlohe, old and in appearance feeble, did not inspire him with sufficient respect for this habit to be laid aside. Moreover, the change in the Russian Imperial throne took place at that time, and William II cherished the idea that by means of his direct intercourse with his friend Nicky the interests of the German Empire would be seen in the most favourable light. It was this which made Holstein thirst for blood ; things were happening over which he had no control, of which indeed he never even heard. That was why he wanted, as he wrote, to point out to Prince Hohenlohe " that he owed it to his past record to accept no continuance of an ambiguous position."

The only trouble was that the old Prince himself had no sort of sense that the Imperial displays of autocracy made his own position untenable. To him it seemed feasible to conduct Imperial affairs without irreparable injury being done by the Most High's private correspondence. How Eulenburg regarded that kind of personal interference we know from his letter to the Emperor of March 6, 1897. His opinion on this point never altered. When in 1920 the Emperor's letters to the Tsar were made public, he expressed himself in a manner which showed how deeply these things must have affected him in their time. It is easy to understand that at the actual moment he did not wish to discuss the subject with Holstein. His letter of January 11, 1895, sounds like an abnegation of battle :

> " You paid me too many compliments in your letter about my intellect and my heart ! All I was trying to do was to aid you with my friendship—so far as I possibly can ; but above all to

offer you some spiritual support when I see you in pain. So don't let us talk about intellect or heart, but about friendship, which is a *matter-of-course*. You see, dear friend, *I* am anxious, *I* torment myself, even as you do. Therefore we mustn't have polemical encounters, but must fight side by side without imagining things about each other. We have no time for that. Neither of us is going to change."

What in his secret heart he thought and felt, he had expressed in a letter to Bülow four days earlier :

"I am fighting an argumentative battle with Holstein, which he must see to be the polemic of a man who is not himself convinced. In the innermost depths of my being I have not, indeed, yet lost hope—but it is more a sentiment than a conviction. . . . Holstein is obsessed by the idea of a re-emergent Bismarck. Much more than need be . . . Germany is groaning under the weight of Bismarck's daemonic personality. Jupiter Ammon ! They now pray to their Jupiter in the shape of a bull under whose horns and hoofs the entire organism is lamenting. For this is the core of the trouble. We should more easily accommodate ourselves to H.M.'s idiosyncrasies if that daemonic force did not reign supreme, overshadowing everything, or else lighting up the country with flame which is not that of the sun. Impossible—whether in or out of office ! It is hard lines to have to bear some of the responsibility for such a destiny as that of Germany's. Oh, blesséd peace at Liebenberg !"

The immediate effect of their mutual frankness was that Holstein withdrew in the sulks from

Eulenburg. "He scarcely ever writes to me—regards me as a renegade from the cause!" complained Eulenburg to Bülow on January 21. Only once in the following weeks did Holstein try again to make his point. On February 7 he wrote: "The Emperor is governing *with* the Cabinets *against* the Constitutional organs of Government. We lack intermediaries between the latter and the Emperor, such as Wilmousky and Lehndorff were under William I. For want of such persons we shall come to smash." And he pointed out how things would go. His prophecies are of no interest, for not a single one of them came true. But why did he not take his good where he found it? It was to his hand; the intermediary he wanted had long been playing Wilmousky's and Lehndorff's parts—he was writing to him now!

A fortnight later Holstein came to his senses, and tried to make up. "These last few months we have been rather grumpy with one another—I mean, *you* have with me—and accordingly we have had but little intercourse. From what I have very recently learnt, this reserve will do our cause no good; for we, in our disinterested detachment, are better colleagues than any third person could be." On April 7 he again (as so often before) lamented the Emperor's increasing fancy for Waldersee, and wished that Bissing could be introduced as counterpoise into the Most High's environment. (It may be observed that in the affair of honour with Count Henckel Bissing was to have been Holstein's, and Waldersee Henckel's, second). Eulenburg was to bring this about. It is like old times to find Holstein writing: "Could you not—as *Leitmotiv*—say frankly and uncompromisingly to the Emperor that Waldersee is getting too big for his boots? And that H.M. cannot very well quarrel with him, but

that he could be made to sing small if his adversary, Bissing, was appointed to H.M.'s bodyguard."

Eulenburg had no idea of yielding to the suggestion ; he merely noted : " The Bissing plan is absolutely right, for *he* would soon put an end to ' aide-de-camp politics.' Bissing is the Emperor's man, and nothing else ; and whenever political questions were mixed up with military ones, he would go straight to the Imperial Chancellor, for he loathes wire-pulling. Unfortunately I can't do anything about it—and Holstein will resent my refusing ever to put a finger in the military pie ! "

But though their correspondence was resumed, their old relations were not. By August there was another estrangement, the reasons for which are not apparent ; but Eulenburg feared that it might lead to a final break. Bülow's influence for the moment averted this. On August 25 he told Eulenburg that Holstein had been complaining and wanted to resign—his sight was failing, and besides there was the growing conflict between Emperor and Foreign Office. In reality he had no notion of resigning, and Bülow went on :

> " What is at present worrying and exasperating him is that he does not know everything that the Emperor writes and has in mind. He willingly granted that the Emperor is very talented, full of the best intentions, and sensible enough at bottom ; of his own accord he praised H.M.'s attitude during the last English visit and towards Salisbury ; but he frequently recurred to the correspondence with the Tsar, saying that it tied the hands of the Foreign Office. He particularly dislikes that correspondence, because it prevents his surveying the chess-board as a whole and moving the pieces about at his own sweet will.

At the moment he is as angry with Lobanov as with Salisbury, and fears too that Goluchowski might embroil us in the East. . . . Holstein is not really vexed with you. His absence from the railway-station when you passed through, *was* intentional, but in my opinion due merely to a transitory fit of ill-temper. He knows that in spite of everything you mean well by him, and that you are the cornerstone without which the whole thing would collapse. He only wishes that you would put up a still stronger opposition to the Emperor's whim for personally conducting policy. When I argued that after all it was better that the Emperor, with you at his side, should personally conduct policy in the Foreign Office sense, instead of in the opposite sense *without* you, Holstein agreed with me, apparently convinced. You will get the upper hand of him —and so will H.M.—if, now as before, some discretion is preserved. . . . Your infinite tact —*ton doigté admirable*—will easily manage that."

Eulenburg was able to perceive the effect of Bülow's advocacy when he was on leave in Germany in September. He wrote to his friend on the 22nd : " In Berlin I found Holstein in a mood of rapturous friendship for me. . . . For the moment he is possessed by a very outspoken dislike for Kiderlen, whom a short time ago he mentioned to me as the only possible Secretary of State. He is as changeable as the sea—but is always an interesting sea."

What he goes on to say has its value for our judgment of Holstein. " I was particularly glad to meet Hatzfeldt " [Count Paul, Ambassador in London]. " I found time—if not for an exhaustive, still for a sufficient, talk with him over the European situation, especially with regard to London. This

took place in Holstein's room ; I utilised a quarter of an hour in which Holstein was absent to ask Hatzfeldt what could have induced our friend to take a negative and dilatory attitude towards the idea of a partition of Turkey.[1] Hatzfeldt thought it might have been the fear of seeming Bismarckian if he favoured any policy which tended to widen the breach between Russia and England. But Hatzfeldt observed that Holstein was now of a different opinion, and had expressed his dissatisfaction with the way H.M. had let Lord Salisbury down. And I myself had later an opportunity of confirming this. Holstein actually went so far as to declare that the Emperor's independent conduct of policy had got us into another mess. But you know as well as I do that H.M., in his conversation with Salisbury, was only putting forth the point of view which had formerly been suggested to him by Holstein."

After a later stay in Berlin, during which there were once more a number of complications to unravel and reconcile, Eulenburg wrote to Bülow on November 12 :

> "I take things more and more resignedly—but still there is a residue which gets on my nerves. On the one hand, experience has taught me to look calmly on such catastrophes ; on the other is the certainty that though our beloved Emperor may cause yet another political upheaval, he will never commit any real folly—may even produce a stroke of genius. And his breezy methods are refreshing, after the Foreign Office Councillors' gnat-bites and croakings.
>
> "I need this kind of faith, because of the more

[1] Lord Salisbury, during the Emperor's English sojourn in August, had touched on this question with him.

and more apparent distrust and antagonism of our friend Holstein towards H.M. When of yore Bismarck tried to subjugate His Majesty, it was soon evident that they were at odds. In this case that will perhaps never be plainly seen, unless there were to be a *sincere* reconciliation between H.M. and the old Prince (Bismarck). That is not to be looked for, and so Holstein will not abandon his most powerful ally. But the Emperor's ever-growing political perceptions . . . are putting Holstein beside himself. He is no longer omnipotent. This causes me endless difficulties. We could not possibly do without Holstein's genius in so ticklish a situation as the present, and on the other hand H.M.'s hasty procedure might, in just such a position, easily put us in a dilemma. All this makes things positively unbearable for me. You divined a situation of the sort in the various correspondences. *I* was the one to suffer."

The ultimate cause of the disharmony now ruling Eulenburg's and Holstein's intercourse was that they wanted different things. Even to Eulenburg that did not become clear for some time—not until he was able to see the year 1895 in perspective. That William II's personality was a source of danger had long been evident to both. Nor was it their differing estimation of these dangers which caused the breach—Eulenburg constrained himself to minimise them as far as possible; Holstein exaggerated them—but the radical difference in their idea of how to meet them. While Eulenburg —to employ a medical simile—thought an expectant treatment with palliative measures the best course, as of old, Holstein plumped more and more decisively for a radical cure with a possible

surgical operation in view. To drop metaphor : Eulenburg wanted to stick to the system which in the course of six years had proved itself not wholly bad—namely, that of guiding and supporting the Emperor by the counsel, unanimous so far as might be, of his appointed officials, of retrieving his mistakes to the best of their ability, and arresting the fatal and growing influence of an irresponsible military environment. Holstein, on the contrary, strained every nerve to replace the tried system by another—that of rendering the Emperor innocuous. Eulenburg, to attain his end, tried to prevent, as far as he could, the occurrence of crises within the Government ; and if that proved impossible, to solve the problems without sensational public conflicts. Holstein, on the contrary, welcomed these crises. He sought to foment and embitter them in every way. Eulenburg exerted himself to strengthen the contact between Emperor and Chancellor ; Holstein perpetually intrigued to separate the aged Hohenlohe from his sovereign —not to cause Hohenlohe's fall, but with the idea that a public encounter would lead to the Chancellor's victory, force the Emperor once for all to submit, and establish the supremacy of the Foreign Office—read : Holstein—under the sign Hohenlohe-Marschall as a going concern. From the earliest days of Hohenlohe's Chancellorship he had followed this course, and it was the idea which made him interfere so urgently and mischievously in the Köller crisis. He only half succeeded ; but Eulenburg, in the December of 1895, had to confess to Bülow :

" I feel that Holstein takes a kind of malicious pleasure in making these attempts, which are as dangerous as they are fruitless. . . . *The centre*

of gravity can lie nowhere but in an understanding between H.M. and the Chancellor. And, in my opinion, all the rest of the Ministry should be sacrificed to that. I can't even venture to warn Holstein, because he regards me as of old a conspirator with Hahnke. But perhaps you could manage to say, as if in an academic spirit, that we must keep off the slippery ground of parliamentary forms of State Government."

The prescription by which he hoped to bring about some sort of cure was laid before the Emperor himself on the return from Breslau to Vienna on December 6. This was the form it took :

"I have again written very frankly to the Imperial Chancellor, and begged him to regard the centre of gravity in all actions as lying in the discussions between Your Majesty and himself. The Imperial Chancellor cannot listen to any suggestions from the other side. He will always retain Your Majesty's confidence while he makes decisions with Your Majesty alone. If he follows Your Majesty's wishes, Your Majesty on your side will give full consideration to such personal questions as he may perhaps bring under discussion. To my Prussian heart the connection of the monarch with his Prime Minister, and the Chancellor *contra* the Ministers is the only conceivable one ; *not* the Prime Minister and all the other Ministers *contra* the Monarch—if ever such controversial questions should have to be faced. Therefore in this matter, too, I regard the centre of gravity as lying in the personal relations between Your Majesty and the Imperial Chancellor. These will solve the problem. . . .

"No one could have written more urgently than I have, and so I do not doubt that my letter

will make an impression. If Your Majesty, then, can henceforth keep in close touch with Prince Hohenlohe, and be perfectly frank with him, I believe in a happy issue."

Well-established understanding between Emperor and Chancellor—it was not to last long, for Holstein applied his crowbar to demolish it once for all. On December 17 he wrote to Eulenburg :

" I should take a gloomy view of the situation at home if I were of a less fatalistic turn of mind. I doubt that the Hohenlohe régime can last long, because I see that you and I will, in the coming year, for the first time be pulling different wires. It is true that I consider myself a Royalist, but *in the same degree as yourself*—for neither am *I* for absolute submission to every idea that may come into H.M.'s head. As I know how sincere you are, I make you no reproach, but I do sincerely hope that you will have none to make to yourself when you see what all this is leading to. . . . Hohenlohe goes to Podiebrad on the 19th, and then probably to Vienna for a few days. *I had not seen him for a fortnight until to-day.* I had had an inkling that your counsels were not the same as mine, and wanted to avoid confusion, so I did not go across to his room. No ill-feeling on this account ; everyone does what he thinks best."

The very next day he was at it again. He " had to report most dangerous machinations " of the ex-Minister Köller. " To-morrow there is a Ministerial Council. A smash is not impossible. . . . Hohenlohe told me beforehand of his resolve to stand by Bötticher and Marschall in favour of this measure. It has not escaped the Prince's notice that the Imperial visit to Friedrichsruh took

place without his knowledge, and that the Emperor has since made no opportunity for speaking to the Chancellor. *Bötticher wants to go*, but the Prince told him that neither the moment nor the measure was an appropriate occasion for an isolated resignation." (Holstein was expecting a new Chancellor-crisis and a new Chancellor who would recur to the Köller traditions.) "A sober-minded politician . . . will not take office in these circumstances. So the Emperor will have to resort to a man who doesn't mind *coups d'état*, whose programme will be to intimidate the Parliament and if necessary the Emperor. This I prophesy, and so I give you warning."

It is manifest to whom that warning refers—Holstein was raising Bismarck's ghost. No less manifest is it that his fears were groundless ; not the most minor of his prophecies were fulfilled. But it is also quite clear that it was he himself who was working up this crisis. He succeeded in winning Marschall completely over. The latter telegraphed on December 19 that the Emperor's visit to Friedrichsruh had caused another critical situation ; the Agrarians desired the fall of Hohenlohe and Waldersee as his successor. "An *immediate* clearing-up of the situation seems essential in His Majesty's interests."

Eulenburg at once seized his pen. He wrote and wired to Hohenlohe to assure him that there was not the slightest danger in the Imperial visit to Friedrichsruh, that the Emperor had no thought of undermining the stability of the Ministry, and that all that was necessary was to restore his confidence in his Ministers. He wrote to Holstein too, and showed him point by point that not one of his anxieties had any foundation, and that the reverse was in every instance the truth. "No—

Hohenlohe will stay, and is the *only* man with whom H.M. will *or can* now reckon. That is quite certain, and all we have to do is to establish, fortify, the understanding between them. *I make this my object very earnestly.* The understanding was a little impaired by the Köller crisis, but His Majesty stands in such great dread of a fresh one that Hohenlohe's position has actually been strengthened, and very noticeably so, by the experience."

He had better not have written the last sentence, for Holstein found it grist to his mill. If the Emperor so dreaded Hohenlohe's retirement, had not the moment come to bring him completely to his knees by a farewell visit from the Chancellor? Unfortunately the Emperor himself at this moment offered him a pretext. In conversation with the English Military Attaché, Colonel Swaine, he had let fall the remark that the English might easily have forced the Dardanelles, for he had seen to it that Austria and Italy would have joined hands with them. Out of this undoubtedly incautious remark Holstein now constructed a towering spectre of calamity. Salisbury, who anyhow was angry with the Emperor, would inform Russia of the saying, the Emperor would appear as an *agent provocateur* who was inciting Europe against Russia, though he had repeatedly assured that country that he had no objection to the investment of Constantinople; and Lobanov might persuade the Tsar to fall upon Germany in conjunction with France. On this fantastic background he inscribed his Mene Tekel in solemn phrases which constituted a definite challenge to his one-time friend:

"Judging by the indications hitherto afforded, it is unfortunately evident that, for all his in-

telligence, His Majesty has been denied the gift of political tact. Initiative without tact is like a battering-ram. Do consider whether you can give H.M. some advice, or ask Hohenlohe to do something. Things can't go on like this. It is now about a year ago, my dear Eulenburg, since I wrote you a letter in which I made conjectures that are to-day in the act of fulfilling themselves. To-day I warn you again. Beware lest history should in time regard you as the Black Knight who was at the Imperial wanderer's side when he turned into the wrong path. . . . You know that I regard your character as in every respect the most trustworthy I have to depend on. But think—has not Providence given you so extensive a sphere of influence for some better purpose than to say at the close of your life : '*Optima voluisse sat est!*"

Looking over this letter after some years had passed, Eulenburg made the following comments, to which the reader will subscribe :

"If ever this Black Knight were to be depicted, Holstein was the man to do it! And that *against* his better knowledge. For he was among the few who knew that I was perhaps the only man who dared to give the Emperor an honest opinion. And the Emperor always consented to hear the truth from me. Let that go to his credit. I was not the man to intimidate the Emperor. For I was his *friend*, and my view of policy was : 'Policy is the art of achieving the possible!' *Not* the impossible."

For the moment he thought it best not to take up the gauntlet. He answered on December 23 :

"After just sending off a despatch which would probably have interested you, I rest on my arms! So I won't answer your solemn letter, which has much impressed me—I am sending you instead a children's story, and in imagination stretching out my hand to you. Very sincerely, loyally, and in cordial friendship. We will leave the word, to-day, to the Immortal Powers—later we can plunge into the depths once more. And God be merciful unto us.

"Your old and faithful,

"PH. E."

But if he thought he could escape, he was mistaken. The very next few days found Holstein overwhelming him with a veritable hailstorm of letters, the object of which is easily perceived. He really thought he had frightened Eulenburg with his image of the Black Knight, and thus made him malleable for his plans—which aimed at nothing less than showing the Emperor the door by means of Hohenlohe, and that without delay. As Hohenlohe was expected in Vienna for Christmas, Eulenburg was to be made useful by egging on the old man. To anyone who understands Eulenburg, the idea is amazing; but in Holstein's other letters at this time there are other things which would not have entered the mind of anyone in his right senses. And even what is practicable and reasonable could only have been conceived, at a period when the Emperor trembled at any revival of the recent crisis, by a person who expressly desired to be obnoxious. Let the reader judge:

"*December* 23, 1895.

"In case you should have any idea of writing to the Emperor, let me advise you to do it with due circumspection. I am more for your giving

Hohenlohe some sense of his position. You have made the mistake of encouraging the old man, who is anyhow inclined to be easy-going, to be still more subservient. And it is from that excessive subservience that there arises the danger of a revolt either abroad or at home. . . . Thus you should urge Hohenlohe to show more firmness and to insist upon regular reports of H.M.'s foreign policy. Such reports must be verbal, for what H.M. can do with written information you have seen from the interview with Swaine."

"*December* 24.

"Even on the eve of the sacred festival you cannot be left in peace. Nor can I. The truth is, it occurs to me that I was too laconic yesterday when I advised against your writing to H.M. I meant only on the *foreign* theme, the hint to abstain from reckless remarks to foreigners. I think it would be risky for you to say anything about that. It is Hohenlohe's job, and his duty; and if *you* tell him so, it will make all the greater impression. But I do think it a matter of urgent necessity for you to make clear to H.M. what you had in view in the home-business (Köller). Now farewell. Your old tormentor,

"H."

"*December* 25.

(After an extended criticism of certain steps taken by the Emperor):

"Why does the Emperor meddle in foreign affairs? He has never done anything like this before. On one side it may be Engelbrecht [1] who is egging him on; but on the other H.M. thinks he can do what he likes with Hohenlohe.

[1] A wire-pulling A.D.C. who will be heard of again.

. . . My feeling is that Hohenlohe should now make a final vigorous effort to effect a change by pointing out to H.M. that *direct* diplomatic interference by H.M. is *out of the question.* If that fails, it would be better for Hohenlohe, along with those among us who have no desire to figure in history as *Epigoni of Lombard*, to go his way now. . . . In case you approve this idea of a final effort I should advise your composing a letter for Hohenlohe to send the Emperor. *No one can do that so well as you can.*" (Holstein suspected that Alexander Hohenlohe was making his father give in to H.M. so as to procure a diplomatic appointment for himself. Hohenlohe, he declared, must insist upon regular weekly reports for himself and the Foreign Office.) "*You know how to phrase and edit it much better than I do.* Beyond this I don't know what to advise. Dear friend, *don't* neglect this. Else you will bitterly rue it, and before very long.

"Your anxious

"HOLSTEIN."

"*December* 26.

. . . "It is not impossible that this unparalleled direct interference of the Emperor's in foreign affairs is the outcome of Prince Bismarck's criticisms. That they do not actually think our foreign policy so bad at Friedrichsruh is evident from the fact that the Bismarck Press represents Bismarck as the 'counsellor.' But to the Emperor the Prince may very well have uttered some of his former epigrams: 'The Foreign Office? And have we really a Foreign Office?' . . . A worse thing is that H.M. has got into the habit of forestalling his Chancellor. In case Hohenlohe is prepared to administer the absolutely

necessary remedy, he will have to take a tone which will show the Emperor that he is in earnest *this* time. You are past-master of fine shades. Think it over ; and remember that, failing the bitter draught, Emperor and Fatherland both *will find themselves in a hole.*

" After all, it occurs to me that you might as well wait and hear what Bülow has to say. He has the same material to judge by, and I have begged him to speak out to you while Hohenlohe is in Vienna. Bülow is a man with ideas of his own. Since the recent change for the worse I have heard nothing from him, but I can scarcely believe that for a patriotic Royalist there can be two opinions about the present state of things. The Emperor his own Imperial Chancellor—regrettable in any circumstances, but in these ! An impulsive and, alas, entirely superficial-minded monarch, who has no conception of public right, political precedent, diplomatic history, or the manipulation of individuals !

" Am I right or not ? Don't be an ostrich, I beg you. You have much more reason for anxiety than I have—lest, if things now go to destruction, contemporaries and historians should reproach us both for fostering Imperial illusions instead of standing out for the true interests of Empire and Fatherland."

" *December* 27.

" I believe, as I wrote yesterday, that the Emperor's latest and most unpardonable eccentricities *are the outcome of Bismarck's talkings-to.* Just because he knows that the Emperor is not a practical man of affairs, he urges him to interfere, in the certain hope of general confusion and a *final catastrophe.*"

Meanwhile Bülow had wired in French cypher from Rome, saying that Holstein had written very amicably, but was in a terrible state of mind, prophesying crises, war, and other calamities if H.M. persisted in interfering in foreign policy. He wanted Hohenlohe to write to the Emperor from Vienna, protesting against such breaches of etiquette. Immediately afterwards came another quick-fire from Holstein.

"*December* 28.

"I beg you to show the Chancellor, as a specimen of the state of affairs, the accompanying outburst of rage from H.M. over the discourtesy of the Darmstadt gentry. Such a degree of Hessian uncouthness is indeed almost incredible, but it shows how the Emperor has lost prestige by eternally running after the Tsar. The Tsar's brother-in-law does not think it worth his while to put himself out for the German Emperor! That gives you a striking proof of the mistakes our sovereign is making in foreign policy. The Grand Duke shows his contempt, because during his whole stay in Petersburg he probably heard no other sentiment than 'Oh-ho, so Willy is running after us again!' Our Emperor's transmitting his correspondence with the Tsar by Russian couriers—perhaps he is ashamed that we should know of it—is on a par with his other follies. The Grand Duke says that the Emperor writes to the Tsar nearly every week; and the Emperor read the report from Radolin, which asserted this, without a word of criticism. The passage was erased by his own hand.

"Apropos, I ask too whether in certain circumstances it might not be quite a good plan for Hohenlohe first to write from Vienna, and then fail to put in an appearance at the New Year's

Day ceremony. But you, with your personal knowledge of the Emperor, can judge of this better than I can."

Let us now read a dispassionate observer's view of the vexed question. Bülow, kept *au courant* by both sides, wrote on Christmas Day to Eulenburg :

"I am convinced that Hohenlohe, as long as he lives . . . will get on with the Emperor, *if* he follows your indications. H.M. ought certainly not to have any reason to suppose that the Ministry is playing fast and loose with him, or wants to keep him in the dark, or even to oppose him as a body. Nor should the Ministry assume the airs of a parliamentary cabinet. . . . You are right in saying that (at heart) the Emperor and Holstein are profoundly antagonistic, and that this (here again you are not deceived) must of necessity grow more and more apparent. Essential divergencies in subjective natures are never to be reconciled. For you, dearest fellow, this will be a source of difficulties, and you will have to be all the more cautious because Hohenlohe and Marschall (in the last resort and *dans leur for intérieur*) will eventually come round to Holstein's general view of things, will feel it to be in affinity with their own, and will stand by him. . . . All you can do is to mitigate, smoothe down, stave off. I say *everything* I think to you, because I know that we are sure of each other's absolute secrecy—and so I say that Holstein, Hohenlohe, and Marschall would, if they believed that H.M. would never in any circumstances turn to their various enemies (Schweinitz, Waldersee, Bismarck, Zedlitz, Miquel, Botho Eulenburg, etc., etc.) *still* see only the differences of opinion between themselves and H.M., feel

him to be in consequence even more in their way, and try to suppress him yet further. It is possibly not a bad thing for the above trio (of course too conservative anyhow !) to know that H.M. is not wholly dependent on them."

Two days later, perhaps under the impression of the most recent news, Bülow recurred to this theme :

" Though I am heart and soul a monarchist, and personally attached and grateful to our most gracious sovereign, this does not blind me to the dangers which reside in the very originality and force of his character. The young Siegfried was exposed to greater perils than King Etzel was. And I know very well that the direct interference of even a highly-gifted sovereign in the (complex and delicate !) mechanism of foreign policy, together with too frequent outspoken remarks to foreign agents, and so forth, may cause very serious consequences. Napoleon III, Louis XV, even Nicholas I and Napoleon I, did no good by that sort of thing.

" Nevertheless I don't think that H.M.'s talk with Swaine was, *in itself*, such a terribly portentous event as it seems to Holstein, or as he wants us to think it. I believe that you in your letter (enclosed for your reference) of the 23rd, very accurately defined—with all your sure insight—the amount of importance to be attached to that interview. But what *is* serious, very serious, is the antagonism between Holstein and H.M. which was revealed by the incident in question. I say to you *alone*, and you will not say it to anyone else : *Can* so complete a divergence between such elemental and subjective natures—when it concerns the whole direction

and conception of affairs—*ever* be reconciled? Can it even, in the long run, be concealed?

"Not only do I admire Holstein's intensity and force, but he has made me fond of him. Though many would not understand this, *you* will not mistake me. I love that tragic nature of his. I would never forsake him—I should like to help him. But for us there is a great difficulty in the fact that Holstein flies off at such a tangent whenever he thinks his system is threatened, or even likely to be obstructed; while if he feels sure of his ground, he tries to exploit the situation in a way which, given H.M.'s susceptibility and the traditions of the Prussian Crown, must inevitably produce ructions, if not catastrophes. Towards high quarters, or even towards yourself, there is little he would not be capable of, did he not believe H.M. and you to be his indispensable allies against his own confederates and his numerous gang of enemies—did he not feel the sword of Damocles hanging over him in the shape of a change of system.

"Holstein must feel sure of us—that is a cardinal necessity. I am doing all in my power to that end, incessantly telling him that your support of him is as loyal as can be, and that you would (for a time and for tactical reasons) take a different attitude *only* if you feared that his might lead to the downfall of the Hohenlohe-Marschall régime, which you earnestly desire to preserve. Perhaps you too could give Hohenlohe a similar hint. But don't forget that Hohenlohe has been immensely intimate with Holstein for the last twenty-two years, and (*dans son for intérieur*) is more drawn to the Holstein system, the parliamentary and bureaucratic ideal, than to our Old-Prussian Royalism.

" Do all you can to smoothe things over between Hohenlohe and His Majesty—that will be to the interest of Emperor and country. Explain H.M.'s interview with Swaine in the spirit of your letter of the 23rd, but without referring to Holstein's secret enmity for the Emperor. In the Imperial Chancellor's letter to H.M. I should be inclined to lay less stress on the Chancellor's ' constitutional ' position than on the vast perils involved in a continual direct (whether verbal or written) intervention by the sovereign in foreign relations—saying that it hampers the Cabinets abroad, that foreign agents get too much insight into secret matters underlying our diplomatic action, that cross-currents, under-currents, might be the outcome, and that at the best it causes perplexity. Suggest that the monarch ought to resemble the big bell at the Kremlin, which rings only very seldom, and then to announce great good news or great misfortune. You know better than I whether we can induce His Majesty to let the Chancellor report on a regular system—it would be a very good thing. The Russian Tsar has certain days and hours for certain reports, and these are never departed from ; that gives the policy of the otherwise disorderly country some stability and poise."

Eulenburg answered on December 29 :

" Holstein's excitement and agitation about His Majesty keeps equal pace with his fears of a tack into Bismarckian waters, and H.M. had by his visit to Friedrichsruh (in which, between ourselves, I discern a slight revenge for the Köller crisis) given him a pretext, seen by me at its real value, but not so seen by Holstein.

" In this state of agitation he becomes unfair

to our side, and on the other hand he rushes into a blind alley because he does not stop to think. The monstrous difficulty lies, at the moment, in the fact that if we want to preserve the present system—and I most decidedly do—we are without a common basis of understanding between the most important factors, i.e., Emperor, Imperial Chancellor, Marschall, Holstein ; and I doubt whether this can ever be reconstituted.

" Each of them is more or less incensed with all the others. If you think of policy (*sans comparaison*, of course !) as a bitch in heat, you will have a vivid picture of the present aspect of affairs. The big handsome Newfoundland [His Majesty] can inflict a deadly wound on each of the rest whenever it suits him. The long-legged one [Marschall], he really wants to dispose of, but he growls and snaps at all the others ; and the solitary little grey terrier [Holstein] is frantically exasperated. How are we to stop his bristling, yapping, and whimpering ? We cannot very well kill the bitch—and she is kept in such a continuous state of excitement !

" Holstein's agitation is indeed, as you justly observe, comprehensible if one sees the cardinal danger in the Emperor's interference in the machinery of policy. Undeniably that might, in certain circumstances, lead to serious consequences. But the concrete case ? Do the remark to Swaine, the wire to Radolin, account for such a state of mind ? H.M. unhesitatingly acquiesced in the subsequent telegrams ' for instruction.'

" His Majesty has before now said and done much worse, much more alarming things, and nevertheless has acquired immense prestige in Europe. In the foreign Cabinets allowance is made for a certain impetuosity, and the residue

gets more appreciation and admiration than falls to the lot of most European statesmen (to say nothing of the Regent).

"No. Holstein's excitement and his *impossible* proposals have another source. The excitement I have tried to account for to you. The proposals derive from Hohenlohe's victory in the Köller crisis.

"Call to mind the perpetually recurrent warnings from Holstein, according to which the new Bismarck régime (while driving the Emperor to the wall) would prescribe his own course to him. But now an extraordinary concatenation of events has forced Holstein to recognise that *his* system was putting the Emperor in a cleft stick, and that H.M. (in the Köller case) *was obliged* to yield—because there was nothing else to be done. . . .

"While I write this, comes a letter from Holstein, with the postscript: 'Would it not be a good thing if Hohenlohe first wrote strongly from Vienna, and then did not come to the New Year reception?'

"That tells you pretty well all there is to know, and gives you a clue to many things. I can very well imagine what he felt when in the Köller crisis His Majesty pulled him up sharp. *But I know too what H.M. felt.* No matter how faithfully I depict our dear sovereign's susceptibility, Holstein will never quite understand it—that is to say, he will never know the compassionate emotion that a friend must feel when his friend is suffering, and a servant when his beloved King is really in pain.

"Hohenlohe is unlike Holstein in that respect. Both are indeed sensitive natures—but they are like sunsets in different countries. I talked with

Hohenlohe about what steps we might take, what rules we might establish ; and found him lucid, tranquil, and subtly impartial. We are entirely of one mind about the situation of the moment : that Holstein is exaggerating the Swaine question and the Radolin ' instructions ' beyond all reason, and demanding the impossible —namely, a strong letter from Vienna to H.M. That would mean :

" 1. That the Emperor, who is now beginning (at an extremely slow pace) to get over the grudge he felt against Hohenlohe for the Köller crisis, would inevitably suspect that Hohenlohe now wanted to make him feel his power again.

" 2. That he could not help getting the impression that *I was conspiring with Hohenlohe.*

" This is so manifest that I ask myself whether Holstein *wants* to give H.M. that impression. He may think that His Majesty, before the coalition of an ' indispensable Chancellor ' and a ' friend,' would pile his arms. I cannot otherwise explain it to myself. Perhaps you can find a better solution. . . .

" I have now arranged with Hohenlohe that I by letter, he by word of mouth, shall soon draw H.M.'s attention very seriously to the perils of interference in the mechanism of our policy, and that Hohenlohe shall report at least *once a week.* To fix a certain day is impossible, given the Emperor's way of life, and would only have the effect of drawing unwelcome attention to the perpetual change of the appointed day.

" Hohenlohe will do his utmost to keep Holstein quiet. He said to me : ' I am so inured to that kind of thing that it does not now upset me.' He is much distressed by the bad relations be-

tween Alexander [1] and Holstein. It is extremely inconvenient for him. But what utterly astounded me was Hohenlohe's outspoken opinion that Marschall, Holstein, and Fischer are consciously or unconsciously working for government by Parliament. He, Hohenlohe, takes this very much to heart, for his duty is to represent Prussian interests first and foremost."

At last Holstein too got an answer. After all that had taken place, it is scarcely surprising that the moot points were evaded and only the immediate practical issues discussed.

"Vienna, *December* 30, 1895.

"I have had too much turmoil of late in connection with the Imperial Chancellor to be able to write at any length. But Bülow has kept me fully informed of your wishes and ideas. I own you are right. Something is bound to happen; but this moment is extremely ticklish, because the Köller crisis still obsesses His Majesty, and any fresh pressure from Hohenlohe would very soon lead to an end of the present system. None of us wants that—especially as your ideas can be carried out in another way.

"If Hohenlohe were to write from Vienna it would infallibly create the impression of a *conspiracy*. His Majesty is so susceptible about anything of the kind that he would ignore the bearing of the letter in the fact of its having been written at all. Therefore the only possible course is for Hohenlohe to make a verbal representation at Potsdam with the documents at hand, while I try what writing from here can do —àpropos the Swaine interview, about which

[1] The Chancellor's son.

H.M. ordered a wire to be sent me. That will scarcely fail to make some impression.

"Now as regards the fixed day for laying papers —we must stick to it (and it *can* be insisted on) that there should be a report once a week. A fixed day would be dangerous—for H.M. is not at home every day. Thus there would be a handle for fresh dissatisfaction. We should always be hearing: 'To-day is the Chancellor's Thursday—*of course* His Majesty has left Berlin.' I want to avoid that. But one day in the week—no matter which—is the right thing, and we shall manage it.

"To speak frankly—I regard another question as more important: the clearing up of the Köller crisis. Marschall *must* be vindicated—that is cardinal, and I stake everything on it. The really abominable suspicions put about by Köller must be got rid of once for all, in some way or other. I have considered the idea of letting His Majesty see the minutes of the session. If you can think of some other way, I beg you to let me hear *at once*. I hope Marschall's promised letter may furnish me with some good material.

"But now *addio* for to-day. I am expecting my guests every moment. I am giving a dinner of thirty persons for the Prince—Goluchowski, Badini, and so on. I don't know whether he likes it—but it is essential to show the greatest possible honour to our venerable Prince.

"I hope to have time to write to you to-morrow about political matters here."

The actual issue of all this epistolary sharp-shooting is to be discerned in a letter of Eulenburg's to the Emperor on December 31:

"Your Majesty can imagine what I felt on

receiving the gracious letter of the 25th. I have read over and over again the words on the first page, which are so full of kindness and friendship, and I thought as I read that God has given me a most wonderful life. But since He *has* so shaped it, I can only hope that He will give me too the mental and physical strength which I need, if I am to be able to serve Your Majesty as my most ardent wishes would dictate. Before I go into the details of the letter, I will venture to say a word about the intercourse I have had here with the Imperial Chancellor. I had not seen him since the beginning of November, and the Köller crisis played a great part in our conversations.

"I can assure Your Majesty with a clear conscience that I found the Prince just as I wished—that is to say, *quite beside* himself about the vexatious turn that the case had taken for Your Majesty, and ardently and sincerely desirous of regaining Your Majesty's full confidence. There could be no mistake about the Prince's profound and cordial affection for Your Majesty, his *personal* love for you and his understanding of Your Majesty's individuality. He said: 'Nothing more painful could have happened to me. I am greatly distressed about it.' In connection with the matter he (to my joy) laid stress upon the Prussian standpoint. And this was evident in other matters as well. He said: "As Premier of the Prussian Ministry of State my predominant duty is to represent *Prussian* interests, and I shall certainly not forget that standpoint when considering the rights of the Prussian Crown, but regard it as the line drawn for my guidance."

"Hearing this, I reflected inwardly that at any rate the Köller crisis had done that much

good—inasmuch as it had made his standpoint clear to him. Hence I see, in working side-by-side with the Prince for the future, nothing but *good* for Your Majesty. And this was very manifest in his official and public reception here. He possesses such prestige in the European world as will not easily be replaced. Everyone vied in showing him attention."

The New Year's gift of 1896 was the telegram to President Kruger, and the indignation it excited in England. There is probably no one who does not to-day regard it as a stupid blunder. That makes it all the more comprehensible that the instigator was eagerly sought for. This is not the place to solve that problem. Philip Eulenburg had nothing to do with the matter. Needless to say, he utterly disapproved of and deplored the telegram ; most likely it would never have been sent, had he been in Berlin. If anyone could have prevented it, he could. Documents and reminiscences have, in recent years, thrown some light upon the incident from both sides. Some have laid the principal blame upon the Emperor ; some on Marschall and Hohenlohe. Holstein contrived to keep out of it, officially speaking. But the political tendency in which it originated, with its challenging rancour against England, was approved of—indeed inspired—by him.[1] His influence over his superiors in the service, who always followed his counsels, could certainly have prevented the despatch of the telegram. Did he not perceive the blunder it was,

[1] This is confirmed by the letter from Bülow, then Imperial Chancellor, on July 13, 1904, cited by Hammann, *Bilder aus der letzten Kaiserzeit*, p. 34. Bülow there maintains that since Bismarck's dismissal, " nothing of importance in our foreign policy was done without Holstein's advice," and in this connection speaks expressly of the " change of mind towards England brought about since 1896."

or did he wink at it, as showing up the Emperor and putting him in a difficulty? Those who have learnt, from the letters here given, what was the train of thought then actuating him, will see some plausibility in this suspicion. If it is justified, if we are to reckon with it, we must conclude that three at least of the really glaring mistakes made by William II between 1890 and 1897, are to be laid to Holstein's charge. It was entirely his doing that the secret Russo-German treaty was not renewed in 1890; it was his advice that involved Germany in the war between China and Japan in 1895; and he purposely let the Kruger telegram go, though he could have stopped it. We shall say nothing here of later follies—the non-acceptance of the English alliance, and Algeciras. But we need go no farther than 1897, and still be justified in asking: What would William II's reign have been like without the Holstein misconceptions?

After this digression, let us return to our theme. The January of 1896 was not to go by without a fresh alarm from Holstein. On the 25th he again unrolled the gloomiest of panoramas for the future—the situation was worse than ever, the Emperor was off his head with excitement, this time about the scheme for building a big Fleet. He was said to intend asking for 100—nay, 300—millions, and to believe he should obtain them by dissolving the Reichstag. He had actually said: "There are people who would do it this very day." And who was to blame? This time it was "little Kayser," a Privy Councillor, who wanted to be Secretary of State. There was no sort of proof of this, but Holstein "believed" it, and moreover "supposed" that Kayser was getting at H.M. through Hinzpeter. "I deplore the things I foresee. The next Reichstag will be aggressive, it won't vote a penny,

and the German Princes will never play up for a *coup d'état*. Then the Emperor will encounter his political Jena, and be as little able to retrieve it as was Frederick William IV by riding round with the flag. I don't like to advise you to write. That would be precarious and fruitless in the Emperor's neurotic state. But could you not come here within the next few days?" [1] Two days later came a cypher telegram. Hinzpeter had been talking of Hohenlohe's position gone, Botho Eulenburg the coming Prime Minister, General von Loë or a Federal Prince as Imperial Chancellor. "Nothing will induce me to stay under Loë. Who would then be Foreign Secretary?"

Eulenburg wired at once. "My health absolutely precludes me from travelling now." He had just got over a severe illness, and took his time about answering by post. How did he find patience to answer his friend's hysterical nonsense so calmly and reasonably? He must indeed have sighed, writing on January 31:

> "These whizzing Chancellor crises leave me cold just now. Despite all H.M.'s neuroticism, he is—I do assure you!—forcing on the Fleet question only because by kicking up an almighty racket he hopes to obtain *something*. H.M. wants a great deal, but not the impossible. I know his plan of campaign and his desires. . . .
>
> "One thing I do hope—that Hohenlohe won't lose his nerve. If the old Prince keeps quiet, and gradually accustoms the world and H.M. to his impending retirement in the course of a few years, a change will come about that will enable you calmly to devote your *indispensable* talents to

[1] Easy to perceive the real reason. Holstein had monstrously exaggerated his tale of woe, had indeed invented a great deal of it, and was afraid that a letter would show this up.

the State. But if the Prince suddenly and definitely gives H.M. the go-by, we shall probably see some surprises. As to Loë, I don't believe a syllable of it—would even give you my word that it will not be. Hinzpeter is prone to talking through his hat."

In a few days he received a letter which unfortunately is missing. It was sent to Bülow in Rome, and was apparently not returned. But that it must have been very unpleasant the answer shows :

"Vienna, *February* 7, 1896.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"You have very seldom written me so cross and unfriendly a letter. But that you *do* write to me is a sign that you have not entirely withdrawn the hand of friendship, and so I seize the nail on the little finger of the left hand, which still remains to me—for I think it will be more profitable for *us all* if I take no offence ; and besides it is repugnant to me to bicker with an old and well-tried friend, and one to whom I owe so much.

"The most unjust of reproaches always hurts us less than the blame which we deserve. What would you have said if I, when you were still feeling so ill after your operation at home, had written to you : 'You seem to be enjoying yourself very much in Berlin—by all means keep it up?' You would not have thought that very friendly. Well, when I, having had a severe attack of that vile influenza, try with all my might to fulfil my official and social duties, because I think it right that I should, you might have had some idea of what 'enjoyment' it afforded me, and what would be the effect of a friend's sarcasm.

"Perhaps I was wrong not to take long leave, as I had intended, and then retire to Liebenberg, a plan of which my wife and I talk every day. I long for it much more than my friends believe; they think that such a relinquishment of power, influence, and great position is a species of lunacy. Well, I have always been that sort of lunatic, and have never changed.

"But now enough of all this. You never speak without a purpose, so *you* must have known quite well why you wanted to hurt me. To me it is a complete mystery."

So the pen-and-ink duel had begun again. Holstein replied at once:

"I got your letter three hours ago, and am answering it from home, in the nightly hours of respite.

"At the moment we are each irritated by something the other has said. If that were all, we could make it up with 'I didn't mean it unkindly,' and pass on to other matters. But unfortunately that is not all. Our divergence—I had rather not say breach—goes down to the very roots. You tend instinctively to an autocratic régime, whether it be of the Russian-patriarchal order, or the despotic-*éclairé* French variety. I am for a moderate application of the system of constitutional co-operation which—except in Petersburg and Constantinople—prevails throughout Europe. I am aware that my point of view is out-of-date, in the eyes of our Court. 'A strong Government, able to function without the Reichstag'—such is the ideal of Admiral von Senden, and not his alone. Even you belong, perhaps unconsciously, to those who hold that every military, political, and forensic

question can be best decided by the Emperor's direct intervention. Similar, though not so far-reaching, were the articles of faith held by the English Cavaliers of old—the objects of my unbounded admiration in my youthful days. It is true that they first ruined the Stuarts, and then died or were ruined themselves ; but, morally regarded, they remain disinterested types of shining chivalry.

" I am not so chivalrous ; I stand for the attainable ; and since ' a Government without a Reichstag ' seems to me unattainable in Germany at present, my desire is that, so long as this Imperial Chancellor does not believe he can get a better Reichstag, he should not render existence impossible between the Emperor and *this* Reichstag. But it is beyond argument that the Chancellor is brought nearer to his downfall with every single occasion on which the Emperor is put into the position of deciding in advance of the Imperial Chancellor, to say nothing of *without*, or *against*, him.

" Your dreams of resigning are dreams that, in the prevailing circumstances, I share. You would resign because you are afraid of not attaining your ideal ; I, because I am afraid that something will be attained which is not my ideal —namely, a political Jena for the Emperor ; the very thing which for six years we have striven to spare him. After Hohenlohe, if between now and a few months he is sacrificed to a mood (or let us call it a tendency), will come the Dissolution Chancellor ; and if the elections, as is probable, go against the Government, we shall have the *Coup d'état* Chancellor. As the German Princes (you know this better than I do) will not play up for that, the Emperor will have the choice between

the programme of Monts (war with Bavaria, etc.) and Jena—that is to say, turning tail. In a certain sense one might say that the movement towards Jena has already begun, for according to what I hear the *coup d'état* temper daily grows in intensity among the Imperial staff; at the best the wretched Lucanus may still have his civilian doubts, though he does not really know what he is or is not capable of, unless he consults the Chancellor and Ministers.

"I can't alter any of these things, so I hold my tongue."

Then Eulenburg retorted:

"Well now, my dear friend, I want to answer your letter of the 9th. Since on the ground of mutual personal sympathy and friendship you renounce our momentary battle, and moreover do not abandon the position that we are both advancing in the same direction—though one of us from the right, and the other from the left, of the stream—I am anxious to find our bridge; and am perfectly sure that we shall. You have certainly never had to complain of want of frankness on my part. I hope at least that you have never fallen into the error of supposing otherwise! I will therefore be equally frank to-day—and say quite dispassionately what I think of your views on the divergence between our outlooks. You are of opinion that *I* have taken my stand with the 'autocratic group' which relies on the Emperor's personality, while *you* espouse the parliamentary cause. You see your system fallen on evil days, and mine rushing to destruction; and so you think we should both take a gloomy view of the future, and in our disillusionment, actual or dreaded, should desire to make our exits.

"But this is very far from being the real state of affairs. I am entirely unconscious of having undergone any vacillation or alteration in my political outlook. I have *never* joined any 'autocratic group,' and never will. Nor is that tendency in the Emperor's environment so very prevalent as you are inclined to suppose. Nevertheless, the Emperor's personality *has* brought about a change of outlook—only not in me, but in you.

"My difficulty in convincing you of this lies in the fact that you do not personally know the Emperor, and have formed a conception of him which corresponds to the inconveniences caused by his actions.

"When, after Bismarck's retirement, the conduct of German foreign policy passed into your hands, you—who are of masterful character—found in your immediate circle a ruling factor which was developing independently, and not within the limits expected or desired by you. That was bound to lead to differences of opinion. But such differences are peculiarly irritating to you, because you do not feel and know that ruling factor to be a human being, but regard him *purely* as a ruling factor—as the bumble-bee, instead of the fly, in the spider's web. Logically, and considering the exhaustion induced by many years of strenuous routine-work, that can only lead to a kind of detestation. The Holstein of 1888 with his Old-Prussian Royalism has in 1896 become—assuredly not an anti-monarchist, but, say, a Parliamentarian, because . . . well, because (the metaphor is in many respects a defective one) a strong, unbreakable web must be spun against the assaults of the bumble-bee.

"As to myself, my well-nigh eight years of

strenuous routine-work have left me *even more exhausted* than you are. The toil of labouring in such a quantity of different fields that scarcely any one man would be capable of being my successor (forgive this apparent boasting—but I want to depict things as I see them) has induced a real undeniable exhaustion, which *you* see partly as yielding to 'autocratic fancies,' and partly as diminution of friendly feeling for you. My exhaustion is so extreme that I should either have had a physical breakdown, or withdrawn to Liebenberg, if my personal intercourse with the Emperor did not inspire me with confident hopes for him, because of his indubitable talents and the ardent idealism which will surely in the end supply him with clearer vision. A confidence which is lacking in you. *That*—not our political views—is our point of divergence. I am profoundly convinced that we shall *never again* be able to dispense with parliamentary forms, and that so we must aspire to such forms as correspond with our own and the nation's needs. The Emperor is no less convinced of this than I am; but when *he* aspires to them, it apparently reeks of the *coup d'état* and absolutism. And how can I convince one who has constructed an image of a personality which he does not know? Even the Emperor's military environment has long forsaken, along with the Conservative Party, the anti-parliamentary position—and in this fact lies one of the *strongest* arguments for the uninterrupted progress of the parliamentary idea in Germany.

"Now I have come to the end of my exposition. We both, *from the same political standpoint*, serve the Emperor. One of us with affection, the other without. We are both exhausted—and look

suspiciously on the symptoms of that exhaustion. The symptoms are so marked that they have actually led to the risk of an *estrangement* between us, which I hope to have definitely and thoroughly banished by this plain speaking.

"I am not without hope that after the rest which we both need, we shall see our co-operation as we have hitherto seen it, quite plainly and clearly. But generally speaking, it is indispensable that that co-operation should be unobscured by any doubts.

"Write me a line, dear friend, to say that you take my *franc parler* in good part."

To this Holstein retorted :

"When I was in the Far West, several years ago, there was a current phrase for being in error, borrowed from racoon-hunting : 'You are barking up the wrong tree.' Well, that is what you are doing now.

"The 'masterful character' which, if I really possessed it, would probably have led me along a different path in life, I will for the moment say nothing about. That I feel myself to be *de facto* director of the political department, is true enough. In that capacity I had frequent battles with Caprivi ; with His Majesty I am not aware of ever having had a difference of opinion. The marginal notes to my reports testify to this day to His Most Gracious approval. At the most I would reproach him with an excess of participation in secret matters, which has occasionally obstructed business. The fluctuating relations between ourselves which you analyse in your letter, and which—this is your one correct deduction—originate in exhaustion,

have not been caused by our official duties, but have arisen in the most varied circumstances, and chiefly because of the frivolous way those circumstances have been dealt with. When the Reichstag seemed intractable, we were threatened with a *coup d'état;* when the Princes intimated that they would have nothing to do with any such thing, the Imperial environment, including Köller, talked about a strong government which would act on its own responsibility, and could do without a Reichstag.

"Your and my 'masterful characters' have for the last six years been incessantly occupied in warning H.M. of the pitfall from which he would have escaped only at the price of humiliating concessions. The hope, so eloquently expressed by you, that the sovereign will win through by the aid of experience and observation, was equally strong in me at first; to-day it is sensibly feebler, or at any rate I fear that experience, to have any effect, will have to be of a sterner kind—of a kind in which the whole population of 50 millions must share.

"Any risk of our quarrelling irreconcilably over our differences of opinion is—apart from other reasons—diminished by the fact that I do not think we shall in the future be often called upon to advise. With every succeeding year in which H.M. escapes the pitfall—by which I mean what the French call *une impasse*—he will be the more convinced that never shall he fall therein, because it is he who superintends everything. So that, generally speaking, in future the current will be so strong that you will wear yourself out in vain, if you oppose it. Therefore remain a spectator for the present; you are still young; your time may come."

Holstein had the last word. There was no object in arguing with him, now that he had lifted the mask and shown his real countenance, the countenance of the conspirator that we have long perceived behind it. Once more we ask ourselves how a man otherwise so shrewd could have conceived the idea that it was possible to induce the Emperor's personal friend, even if he had not been who he was, to take part in a plot against his sovereign and friend ! There is only one explanation of such a rash endeavour—Holstein said to himself that the conspiracy had little chance of succeeding unless Philip Eulenburg would at least, by neglecting his trust, be a passive supporter of it.

Nevertheless he tried to gain his end without that support. There now begins an embittered struggle for the Emperor's person—Holstein trying to wear him down, while Eulenburg stood protectively in front of him. The game lasted more than a year, and ended in victory for Eulenburg.

IV

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE EMPEROR

THE first round was fought over the long-projected reform in court-martial procedure. War Minister von Bronsart—an enigmatic personality of whom it was said that he aimed, with Bismarck's support, at being Imperial Chancellor—had devised this scheme in order to shine before nation and Reichstag as a liberal-minded General. He wanted to introduce the modern principles of publicity and oral procedure into the military administration of justice. To the Emperor, who was supported by the Military Cabinet, this idea was an abomination. In his New Year address to the Generals (1896) he expressed his distaste for it, whereupon the War Minister handed in his resignation. As the Prussian Ministry and the Imperial Chancellor were on His Majesty's side, another big crisis hove in sight. And that was what Bronsart and Marschall, egged on by Holstein, were working for—a definite crisis which would annihilate the Emperor's personal authority, and deliver him up bound hand and foot.

Old Hohenlohe's position was a peculiar one. He saw the danger and wished to avert it, but was afraid that Press and Reichstag would drive him into a corner, leaving him no alternative but to take his stand against the Emperor. On March 25 he wrote to Eulenburg :

" I won't hear of such things as ' driving to the wall ' and ' vigorous action ' ; we both have the

right instinct and intend to keep clear of that, continuing to exercise our powers of reconciliation. The only danger is that I might, without having foreseen it, find myself in a false position. So I must sit even tighter than usual."

The venerable gentleman can scarcely be said to have "sat tight" when in spite of warnings he again raised the question of the courts-martial in a written minute to the Emperor. That was done by Holstein's advice. Hypnotised by those eyes, he had tied his own hands and put the Emperor into a state of uncontrollable excitement. (March 13.) Eulenburg, who was then attending a wedding in Berlin, wrote to Bülow :

"The cabal against H.M. resembles in many of its features (among them Holstein) that before Bismarck's dismissal—they know not moderation, they will stick at nothing. I can only tell you that I am terrified !"

Three days later he was able to announce that he had once more succeeded in conjuring the tempest. His letter depicts the situation in swift brush-strokes :

In the train. March 16, 1896.

"These have been feverish days, dearest Bernard. Yesterday I was absolutely done in —physically and mentally. Nothing but the Emperor's gratitude for my 'dove-tailing' can compensate to me for the definite expenditure of nervous force.

"I don't exactly remember what I wrote you from Berlin. The situation is as follows : There is *no doubt* about the cabal—Holstein, Marschall, Bronsart. There is a regular system, a fixed purpose of using any difficulty which arises to *throttle the Emperor*. Hohenlohe did not need to

be enlightened on this point. It is indubitable that this group positively gets up difficulties that may set Hohenlohe in opposition to the Emperor and make manifest his solidarity with the others, thus *forcing* the Emperor to give in. I established this fact with Hohenlohe, and we agreed confidentially that he shall not identify himself with them on any acute question. That may, it is true, lead to a *partial* crisis—but it may also bring the group to its senses. My efforts have succeeded in establishing a complete *rapprochement* between the Emperor and Hohenlohe.

" For two months I had been at odds with Holstein. Now peace is apparently declared—but only on the basis of mutual personal understanding and with reference to foreign policy. Holstein advised me to give up now and *in general* any intervention in the Emperor's favour ! He pointed out that perhaps I should some day feel it a great burden on my conscience to have advised Hohenlohe's compliant attitude towards the Emperor !

" When, the day before yesterday, I had averted the immediate peril, and remarked to Holstein that I should find it hard to curb my instinct whenever I saw any possibility of helping the Emperor—Holstein at once fell silent. And when yesterday evening I was chatting amicably with him before I went, and touched upon these recent proceedings, he begged me not to say anything more on the subject, for our views were too *divergent* for us ever to be able to come to an understanding.

" So he feels his system to be undermined by Hohenlohe's compliance and my moderating influence. *What do you say to that ?* "

Old Hohenlohe had been momentarily won over by Eulenburg. He even arranged with the latter that, as Holstein no longer wrote to him, *he* should through his son, Prince Alexander, keep him *au courant* with the more important issues. It is significant that the Prince, so as not to arouse suspicion, was obliged to write to a covering address. The weakness of the Chancellor's position was soon to be yet more plainly revealed.

The burning question of court-martial reform had been successfully shelved for some months. Then in April, as if to order, the Press started a lively agitation in its favour. Simultaneously it might be read in some journals that Philip Eulenburg, as opponent of reform, was to replace Hohenlohe as Imperial Chancellor. No one but Holstein could have given this false announcement to the Press, for no one but he could have known that Eulenburg, who had avoided taking any attitude in what was a purely military question, was secretly no friend of public proceedings in courts-martial, because in Bavaria, where the system already prevailed, he had observed its evil effects. It had not occurred to him that this could affect his position, but he had once confided his views to Holstein—who now utilised the knowledge to raise a hue-and-cry against him, not because he could really have feared Eulenburg's appointment as Chancellor, but so as to nullify his pacific efforts. If Eulenburg was to be regarded as the coming reactionary Chancellor, he certainly would not be able to show his face in Berlin during the fateful days of decision.

This time Eulenburg did take up the gauntlet. On April 30 he wrote to Holstein :

" After the hints you gave me in Berlin I

cannot really be surprised that you preserve such absolute silence upon the apparently very chequered condition of home affairs. As I hear nothing from the other side, I am driven to the newspapers for my present information. Of course I do not dream of mixing myself up, without some strong inducement, in things that I prefer to keep out of. I have had quite enough for years to rack my nerves, in the way of what I will call dilemmas. Therefore I do not feel the *smallest* desire to interfere, unless *it is urged upon me by responsible people as likely to be of some service.* Naturally, in this isolation, 'far from Madrid,' I am very much annoyed by that hint in the newspapers (sent me no doubt at your request) that I, as opponent of the publicity of courts-martial, have been spoken of in connection with the Imperial Chancellorship. Considering my absolute silence on that question . . . it is an *utter mystery* to me *which side* can be talking of my 'opposition.' If you can find out anything about it, please tell me what you conjecture."

Holstein answered at great length, denying that he was in any way to blame for the newspaper articles, and trying to inculpate Bronsart. He even ventured on the hypocritical remark that "our influence on the Press is by no means a great one." For the rest he persisted that this was the moment for destroying the influence of the "Cabinet"—i.e., of the Emperor. . . . The retirement of the War Minister would "make that of the Ministry inevitable, and would very soon turn the position of the country, and especially of the Emperor, into an extremely serious one." He added: "I imagine that a crisis, if there is one, will come very suddenly, so as to take advantage of the Emperor's

present state of excitement, and give *you* no time to soothe and enlighten him."

The crisis had been timed, with cunning foresight, to come off when Eulenburg could not in any circumstances personally intervene. For during those very days the millennium of the Hungarian Empire was to be celebrated with great pomp at Buda-Pesth, and it would have caused a frantic sensation if the German Ambassador had hurried to Berlin instead of representing the German Emperor at the festivities. So Eulenburg took the extreme course—he sent the Emperor Holstein's letter, and added a comment of his own : " Holstein's concluding remark is amusing ! One would think that I struck terror into every heart when I appear upon the scene ! And why ? Simply because I am up to all their tricks, and have never advised Your Majesty from a party point of view ! From my distance I can do no more than beseech Your Majesty to come to no hasty decision. Thanks to the War Minister, the situation has become really dangerous. I beg Your Majesty not to get on his bad side—otherwise he will revenge himself by finding a pretext for taking his departure."

The Emperor played the game, and took care not to embitter the situation. In May, while he would be at Prökelwitz, the decisive moment was to come. Eulenburg was as usual with him. The preceding discussions in Berlin had discouraged him to the utmost. The War Minister had even then publicly announced his resignation, the State Ministry had declared the position untenable and demanded that the reform proposals should be introduced as soon as possible. In Press and Reichstag reigned growing indignation against " Cabinet Government." It was evident that the Government would not be able to escape giving

some sort of airing to the question, and everything depended on what attitude the Imperial Chancellor would take. Eulenburg clearly foresaw the crisis. He wrote to Bülow on the way to Prökelwitz (May 13) :

> " I shall be as neutral as I possibly can, because I am no soldier and cannot speak from experience. There's a sort of atmosphere of Bavarian-Badenish independence, of wanting to bully the King of Prussia. On the other hand the King of Prussia cannot play the reactionary Prussian Emperor. Every way it's a tight hole, and I am going with a heavy heart to Prökelwitz. . . . Of course I shall—even at the cost of opinions which I cannot really sacrifice—stand *firm* for the indispensability of Hohenlohe. It would be a mortal blow for Emperor and Empire if the old man went."

And yet he once more succeeded in getting over the difficulties ! It was, however, harder than it had ever been before. He had, with great trouble, persuaded the Emperor to give the Chancellor a statement for the Reichstag ; and had found for this a conciliatory form of words which did not in any way anticipate the decision. But the adversaries contrived to induce old Hohenlohe to put upon the words a gloss which the Emperor had expressly excluded. The sovereign was beside himself when he heard of this. If *he* had answered, it would have been all over. Eulenburg averted that calamity by begging the Emperor to entrust the reply to him. Hohenlohe took this in bad part, and —egged on by Holstein—retorted angrily that he would not have words put into his mouth. " I am not a Councillor, but the Imperial Chancellor, and it is mine to know what I intend to say."

Fortunately the Emperor was in such excitement over some feats of sportsmanship that he did not ask to see the despatch, and so Eulenburg managed to persuade the Chief of the Military Cabinet, General von Hahnke, to avoid an open conflict by declaring himself satisfied. The Emperor then accepted the *fait accompli*.

But these Prökelwitz days, though they had deferred the crisis, had by no means got rid of it. Up came the old question of public courts-martial for the Prussian Army. Hohenlohe had been talked over—told he owed it to himself, as an experienced statesman, to insist on publicity, because it had been introduced in Bavaria when he was Prime Minister there. But the Emperor was adamant. He let fall the remark "that he had nearly done for himself with the Army by the two-years' service, and nothing and no one should persuade him to do for himself altogether." During the Norwegian cruise in July he was entirely absorbed in the question, was inclined to utilise the opportunity for getting rid of not only Bronsart, but Marschall, and was constantly in a state of high excitement. Eulenburg had to use all his tact and patience to avert a breach with Hohenlohe. . . . Of his interview with the Emperor he instantly sent Bülow an account:

> "On the evening of the 21st arrived the Chancellor's written reply. As was to be expected, it disputed all three points:
>
> "1. A change of opinion on his part regarding military reforms.
>
> "2. Bronsart's dismissal.
>
> "3. Marschall's dismissal—and merely made a suggestion which might enable H.M. to avoid sensational publicity. Hohenlohe declared him-

self ready to concur in Bernard Bülow's replacing Marschall, but at the same time drew such a picture of the dangers attendant on Marschall's retirement that his 'concurrence' was not far removed from its reverse.

"I told H.M. that Hohenlohe's answer had arrived and was not encouraging; and I begged him to have a quiet talk with me about it—it could not *really* be discussed, I said, in less than an hour of absolute tranquillity! The Emperor let the 22nd go by. In the many tête-à-têtes we had that day I would not go into it deeply, merely making general remarks on the scope of Hohenlohe's reply; and I saw very well that my reluctance or 'mystery-making' was instilling some apprehension into the dear Emperor.

"Early on the 23rd H.M. asked me whether I would now read him the Chancellor's letter. We sat down in the little saloon on deck, and I began my reading. H.M. grew very grave, and said that the idea of a compromise on military reform was entirely out of the question, because he must adhere to the position that *no concessions* would be made in the matter of publicity. Two large tears escaped from his eyes as he said: 'I should think myself a sorry fellow if I yielded on a point which my forerunners regarded as essential, as right! How could I face them in Heaven—whither, in any case, I am far from being worthy to go? And what would become of me *in the Army*, which would see in this the destruction of all its defences—the Army, in whose eyes I have already undertaken a heavy responsibility in the shape of the two-years' service!' . . . I begged H.M. to let me sketch, with perfect frankness, the perils which he might be obliged to encounter. I began by saying

that I did not intend to be at all pessimistic—that I was not in the least alarmed at the idea of accepting battle, because Prussia was strong enough to fight to the end. But (I said) I would beseech him to hear me quietly—even if it took longer than he liked.

"Then he listened with really touching earnestness. And it took a whole hour, in which I seized the opportunity to speak more exhaustively of the internal situation than I had perhaps ever done before. . . . H.M. was very much impressed. The dear Emperor had not clearly perceived the potential consequences."

But the game was only half won. Eulenburg succeeded in winning the second round as well when he visited old Hohenlohe at his summer villa in Aussee, whither the Chancellor had fled from Holstein's importunities. They agreed to postpone the decision until the autumn, and meanwhile cut the intriguing Bronsart's claws by promoting him (this was the Emperor's own idea) to Court as Adjutant-General.

But Fate had ordained that these good fruits should never ripen. By November there was once more thunder in the air. Hohenlohe and Marschall were not beloved by the Emperor's permanent staff, and these gentlemen did their best to get rid of Marschall in particular. The Emperor disliked this Minister so much that the insinuations of the aides-de-camp always fell on fruitful soil. In November their exertions were so far rewarded that he began again to dally with the idea of a conflict with the Reichstag. The War Minister one day actually informed several people that he had been ordered by the Most High to foment a quarrel. It was Holstein who told Eulenburg of

this. Since September he had again been markedly approaching him, though in May the Prökelwitz proceedings had openly revealed their antagonism. Eulenburg, going over his documents in 1902, summarised his memories of these days as follows :

> " The consciousness that he still needed me must in such circumstances have been indeed a bitter one. . . . Holstein did need me if we were to keep Hohenlohe and Marschall. For after all the dream of his heart was always this : A muzzled Emperor, far from Berlin, lingering on the coast or in the forests, concerned with reports only for the purpose of signing them ; while Hohenlohe and Marschall, the driving forces guided by him, Holstein, bowed submissively to the Holstein will. Then would come the grand moment when I, too, could really and finally be dispensed with. At the time, alas ! neither could *I* break with Holstein ; for amid the undeniable perils which in many respects derived from the Emperor's character, I was not alone in considering Holstein's great talents to be indispensable. No one could replace his understanding of complex questions of international importance. . . . In the Emperor's and the Government's interests he had to be humoured, as one humours a bad-tempered, erratic, positively dangerous sporting-dog for the sake of his good nose."

Holstein must have felt hard hit by Eulenburg's triumph in May and afterwards, when he averted the grand crisis. " The rift already in being had gone past mending. Holstein now perpetually used the poisoned spear, representing me to all and sundry as the blind instrument of Imperial caprice, so as to excite public opinion against me." A letter

from him on August 13 testifies to the truth of this :

> " I am worn out, and mean to roam for some weeks among the hills, so that at first I shall have no fixed address. Further discussions of the situation between us are fruitless, for you go your own way, and on that way I feel lost. I can't see which is the means and which the end, which the driver and which the driven. . . . Only one thing can I perceive in the whole muddle, and that is that you are bent on increasing the number and the acrimony of your enemies."

The wind veered again in the late autumn. On November 8 Eulenburg could record :

> " Holstein is more intimate, more candid, more amicable than he has been with me for *years*. A change which coincides with Bernard Bülow's stay in Berlin. His Majesty's total incapacity for politics is his constant refrain, added to which he earnestly warns me against involving myself in any question whatever, or setting forth my views on any subject. I must take care of myself, he says, because of things to come ; I must not wear myself out and must have nothing to do with the smash which will somehow arrive. I rather think he means me to be the moving spirit, while *he* is the croaking frog. If the sky clears again, he will go back to his eyrie, and we shall hear the old song. However, things may turn out quite differently."

It was so—Holstein needed Eulenburg. That was why on November 24 he fed him up with tales of how the Emperor's Staff was more and more inclined for a fight. Eulenburg lost no time. On the 26th he wrote to the Emperor, told him what

he had heard from Berlin, and added this warning :

" I do not know all the details of the last few days' proceedings ; but I cannot imagine that there is such a change in Your Majesty's outlook. Nor has the parliamentary situation, or the relation of the Federal States to Prussia, undergone any change. It is the same sort of thing—if not just now *accentuated*—that was going on last summer, when Your Majesty so graciously permitted me to discourse to you on the dissolution of the Reichstag and its consequences. I again say explicitly, reminding Your Majesty of that discourse, that the situation is in *no way altered*—indeed it is even more acute and disturbing. Anyone who should advise Your Majesty to force the issue would be either a despicable political bungler, or else in bad faith ; that is to say, he would be saying to himself : ' If the going is too strong, the Emperor will lose his nerve, flee to Hubertusstock, and let X. Y. Z. do as they like.'

" No, Your Majesty ! I stick to the belief that our last talk is the right basis for Your Majesty's internal policy ! It is not well to lay a finger either on the Reichstag or the Hohenlohe Ministry, while the House is assembled—and not afterwards either. The German nation would cease to understand Your Majesty."

Holstein, to whom this letter was communicated, wired in cipher on the 29th : " Once more filled with admiration for your achievement." Next day he wrote : " Dear friend ! That letter was a great and courageous action, executed with the brilliant skill which is your secret."

Not a fortnight had gone by before there was another hullabaloo. The cause this time was the

Lützow lawsuit. Herr von Marschall had been accused by the Press of having given Police-President Lützow material for a perfidious calumny upon some members of the Emperor's Staff; he had had "recourse to publicity"—that is to say, had taken legal steps, and in the process Police-Commissioner von Tausch had been revealed as the instigator of these and other contumacious and slanderous machinations. The case ended in a verdict against Lützow and the arrest of Tausch for perjury. It had been a dazzling forensic triumph for the one-time Attorney-General (*Staatsanwalt*), who was justly acclaimed by the public. But politically the case had its seamy side. A high-placed Prussian official had been disastrously exposed by a Prussian Minister and Secretary of State. Among the Emperor's Staff this was the prevailing impression; and though the newspapers showered bouquets on Marschall and his friends expected an Imperial Order for him, his opponents believed the moment had come to cut his throat. They were not much mistaken, so far as the Emperor's feeling went. So long ago as October 22 he had said to Eulenburg: "I can't stand Marschall any longer! I don't care if twenty Lützows lose their cases!" Eulenburg himself had been mixed up in the case, for Tausch had made a great point of his relations with him and had given the impression of his having been to a certain extent made use of by Eulenburg. Eulenburg offered to give evidence, and was able to declare on oath that the only official intercourse he had had with Tausch was when the latter had had charge of the arrangements for the safety of the Royal personages in 1894 at Abbazia and in 1895 at Stettin. Nevertheless people persisted in regarding him as the secret influence behind Tausch. To put an end

once for all to this foolish and malicious talk, the letters and telegrams relating to the incident are given here.

Cipher telegram from Holstein.

"Berlin, *December* 5, 1896.
"3.30 p.m.

"Despite the categorical denial instantly given by Baron von Marschall to Tausch's base calumny upon you, it has caused such a great and universal sensation that Fischer wishes you to be told you must come here at once. So wire without delay to Drescher that you desire to be called as a witness on Monday, and that you will be in Berlin to-morrow evening. In any case, start to-night. Your voluntary appearance will of itself have a good effect."

Telegram to the Foreign Office.

"Vienna, *December* 5, 1896.
"6.40 p.m.

"Have asked to be called as witness. . . . Please get His Majesty's consent and tell him from me that Lützow's case has made my evidence necessary, that I shall be in Berlin Sunday, Monday being the day I am called-for, and most humbly beg His Majesty to receive me during my short stay."

Telegram.

"Bückeburg, *December* 7, 1896.

"Telegram received this morning. As His Majesty fears that other business may prevent his seeing you in private to-morrow afternoon, he requests you to leave Berlin (Potsdam Station) to-morrow morning at 8.40 for Magdeburg, and

there take the Royal special train which, coming from Brunswick, reaches Magdeburg at 1.16. Unfortunately you will have two hours' wait at Magdeburg, but it can't be helped. Arrival at Wildpark 3 o.c., whence you could take the next train to Berlin.

"AUGUST EULENBURG."

From Holstein.

"I have nothing particular to say, but regret your tardy arrival not on my own account, but because of the general situation. We are on the eve of the Tausch crisis. Minister Bötticher, who will be at home all this afternoon, would like to speak to you.

"Your H."

Note (by Eulenburg).

"I spoke to Bötticher. The Emperor's unfriendly marginalia about Marschall at the outset of the brilliantly successful case exactly confirm my prognostication that the case would only embitter his feeling against Marschall. For it is true, as the Emperor says, that the 'law-official has run away with the statesman.' That gives him *too* strong a handle for attacks on Marschall. Nevertheless there won't be a crisis *yet*."

To the Emperor (from Eulenburg).

"Berlin, Hotel Bellevue, *December* 8, 1896.

"May I most humbly give Your Majesty the following addition to my to-day's information about Marschall.

"I found him *remarkably* grim when I was talking to him just now (in the evening) and guessed at once that he had got wind of Your

Majesty's feeling about him. I poured oil into his wounds and said he was mistaken if he expected to find Your Majesty at all *ungracious* to him ; but he replied : ' At the Crown Council in Hubertusstock I received His Majesty's express commands to proceed uncompromisingly and by every means against the Press—and I have done so. I considered it my *duty* to report to His Majesty on the case, if only because I have, in the interests of the State, *suppressed matters of whose existence His Majesty must be informed.* They relate to the men behind Tausch ' (Marschall gave me no names) ' and to other abominations, besides those we know of, perpetrated by that close corporation. I tell you quite frankly that if at this moment I should be ungraciously treated by His Majesty, my honour would forbid me to remain another day.'

" I answered that all this was beating the air, that His Majesty would undoubtedly be interested in hearing of such matters as related to the case and those behind the case, and would certainly not treat him ungraciously. I said that he need not be troubled with thoughts of resigning, which at this moment could not but be a great inconvenience to His Majesty. But the clouds did not vanish from his tragic mask. He looked gloomily at his shirt-cuffs, soiled in the service.

" Now I earnestly implore Your Majesty to receive Marschall cordially when he makes his appearance to-morrow morning, and clear his countenance of these clouds. Will not Your Majesty reflect that here is a man who was *convinced* he was acting rightly ? It is *dreadfully* hard to be given a thorny branch when one is expecting the laurel—and for any resulting out-

break of bitterness Your Majesty would now suffer."

To B. von Bülow.

" On the way to Vienna, *December* 10, 1896.

" Being still under the impression of all I had gone through in the summer and autumn, I was not much perturbed by this business. But it was certainly unpleasant.

" And it is still more unpleasant now, when I am continually being attacked in *Vienna* by the *Neue Freie Presse*. I can account for this well enough, and I believe I know the man behind this attempt to make my position in Vienna impossible. I am not blind to the fact that the circle of those who are hostile to and envious of me is widening. Would the poor Emperor might be spared from having to sacrifice me! It would give him great pain. I feel that he cares for me more than ever. People who, in spite of my evidence *on oath*, go on calling me one of the men behind Tausch will be quite ready to perjure themselves. And there are undoubtedly persons who on occasion fight with weapons against which a decent man is *defenceless*. . . .

" His Majesty, when I entered the dining-room, was *evidently displeased* at my having come to give evidence ' in this beastly business.' But he soon recognised my motive. Not so the Staff, who regarded it as a gesture of friendship towards Marschall. I dissipated the gloom which hung over the circle by my description of the proceedings—the queer fish I had seen, the situations! In ten minutes the Emperor was laughing —and was there ever a company at table which would not join in when His Majesty ' condescends ' to merriment!

"After breakfast I was left alone with the dear Emperor—whereupon a flood of objurgations broke over my head. He opened his heart to me about the *impossibility* of governing with Marschall any longer—even with Hohenlohe it was impossible now. Prussia would be ruined by such leaders, who *entirely misunderstood* her obligations and those of her King. He was suffering terribly—the poor fellow! I could only catch his dear hand and press it, saying that Prussia was still powerful enough to have undergone no real damage. My emotion stemmed his anger; he felt at once that I quite understood him, and that assuaged his grief. He grew calmer. . . .

"But the dear Emperor really has so much common-sense—such a swift apprehension of things. So he saw at once that a crisis with Marschall, in this moment of Liberal triumph when he is toasted in millions of glasses of beer every evening, would do the sovereign endless harm.

"'Well then, things shall stay as they are till the New Year—no longer—it can't possibly be longer. And old Hohenlohe shall go too.'

"I said nothing. When I parted from H.M. at Wildpark, he said again in a low voice: 'I will think of what you say. I will even be cordial—as cordial as I can.'

"In Berlin I found Marschall gruff, and Holstein on the crisis-tack. He had urged Marschall to demand an audience for report on the law proceedings. If it was refused he was to send in his resignation. I got Marschall to wait a day, and he was pacified by my promise to write to H.M. of his intention. As Marschall expects the worst and as H.M. is going to be 'as cordial as he can,' I hope that, even as I write

these lines, we may be in smooth water again.

"But of this you may be sure—the case has knocked the bottom out of things. So prepare yourself gradually, my poor dear fellow. There is time still, but it won't last many months. We shall have a chance—if God wills—to discuss the situation in Venice.

"Generally speaking, I am under the impression that none of them is *willing* to wait. They think H.M. ripe for them to venture on any word or deed which may precipitate the catastrophe. No one suspects that I see through it all—and the Office has no idea how combustible I think the situation. I have one aim in view—to guard H.M. from making a change which will come easier when Marschall's laurels are forgotten, or at any rate withered."

Cipher telegram.

"Berlin, *December* 10, 1896.

"To-day's long interview for report with Secretary of State went off pacifically; ended with question put and expression of entire confidence.

"HOLSTEIN."

It was like a foretaste of things to come when on this occasion Eulenburg was venomously attacked by a portion of the Press. He wrote of it to Holstein on December 14:

"*Kladderadatsch* is incredible! I see from this (and many other symptoms) how angry certain circles are at my having come so well out of the Tausch business. I believe, indeed, that few men in Germany are so hated as I am, and I

think that, instead, they might feel a little gratitude towards me! The *Neue Freie Presse* here has behaved unbelievably. . . . Emperor Francis Joseph was so indignant with some journals on my account that he wrote to Bubini and sent him to call on me. The *Fremdenblatt's* attitude was quite correct."

Bülow wrote of these things on December 19 :

"I too was amazed by the abominable insinuations in certain papers. Only they seemed (and seem) to me so utterly stupid that I find it hard to believe they can have made any sort of impression. It will not now be easy to cut the Bismarckian connections with the *Neue Freie Presse.* However, I believe that with your tact and charm you will, by getting into personal touch with one or other of the men on that paper, succeed in stopping its attacks on you. . . . But do not, dearest Phili, exaggerate to yourself the importance of such attacks. In the last issue they are not directed against you, but against the dear Emperor, whom they hope to get at *through you.* And therefore H.M. cannot and must not and will not ever let you down—apart from the fact that all good men are on your side. And the number of these good men is great after all, thanks be to God. *Non prævalabant portæ inferni.*"

The Lützow case was only the prologue, the resulting proceedings against Tausch were the play itself. In various quarters and for different reasons it gave rise to unpleasant anticipations, and in the most exalted circles there was increasing hostility against the Minister who had gone to such extremes. Marschall was more and more

violently attacked, and the Emperor more insistently urged to dismiss him. One Minister, probably Miquel, was said to have, in his presence, banged on the table and shouted : " We must get rid of the South Germans ! " The Emperor himself was excited beyond measure. More than once he believed Hohenlohe to have gone behind arrangements made between them. In his view this was not only perfidious but insubordinate ; and he said in a letter (January 5, 1897) that he would wait until the early spring, " but then, dear Phili, though you should go on your knees to me—the game's up ! Then we *must* have our spring-cleaning, or we're done for. Morally and materially ! I can't stand it any longer than that ! " Moreover, from South Germany he had heard of a supposed anti-Imperial agitation got up by Marschall.

Eulenburg wrote that to dismiss Marschall just then would be very regrettable, he having gained so high a place in popular favour. " We must very carefully consider the method of a rupture in the spring. The most propitious moment would doubtless be that of some old ambassador's retirement, when Marschall might be requested to replace him. . . . I will not and cannot do anything to obviate this change—I will do nothing but help Your Majesty. I too feel that I can no longer bear to see Your Majesty so tormented ! If only I could hope that Your Majesty would thereby be *really freed* from all your cares ! But new men bring with them new combinations and anxieties."

Holstein, again on the spot with an almost daily threatening letter, was answered on January 13 :

" I have to thank you for two exhaustive letters, and do so most sincerely. I had had but

little news from Berlin. You have lifted the veil, and many things that I could see only in outline are now clearer to me. . . .

"His Majesty's long-standing antipathy for Marschall's type has merely increased. For years we have been enduring this friction between two incommensurable forces. A change is the less to be hoped for because Marschall has not managed to make a single friend among those nearest to His Majesty. Such an antagonism as exists between His Majesty's and Marschall's natures can at best be no more than modified by skilful handling. But where are these skilful hands? I have done my utmost, and shall continue to do it, to prevent sudden and catastrophical decisions—but we cannot hope to *get rid* of these antagonisms. The only question is how long we shall succeed in keeping them from the public eye, and furthering the Imperial and national interests *in spite of them*. . . . The Lützow case has complicated the situation. When I was pleading by letter for an audience to be granted to Marschall, I appealed to His Majesty's heart by writing: "Will you not reflect that a man who thinks he has fought and triumphed in a good cause, looks forward to the laurel? What ensues, when he is handed a thistle?"[1]

"His Majesty thoroughly understood, and let his heart speak. But that mood cannot last, and in Marschall's interest I regret that he used the expression: 'I have had recourse to publicity.' The Prussian Junker feels himself justified before God and his own soul when he combats that essentially modern sentiment. The combat is

[1] It is amusing to see how Eulenburg has now touched up his metaphor! (Translator's note.)

to him a *duty*—that is why he is so dangerous.

"I ask myself whether, in the long run, it is salutary to let such antipathies hold the field—may not the organism be unfavourably affected? But there is no doubt that it would be *positively shattered* if public opinion were to become possessed by the idea that the present system was to be sacrificed to fear of the Tausch case. That must in any circumstances be guarded against; and I shall, so far as lies in my power, do all I can to prevent it."

Holstein at once seized on the opportunity to resume his persecution. On January 15 he wrote:

"Your letter both moves and disturbs me—the first because of your self-sacrificing ardour; the second because of the blindness which makes you, out of personal affection for the Emperor, totally mistake his personal situation.

"The year 1896 has been an evil year for His Majesty. It began with the Kruger telegram, and ended with the appointment of Muraviev[1] and Queen Victoria's letter, in which she begged her grandson not to come to the Royal Jubilee, and that because of the state of English public opinion! So left and right, with Russia and England, he has played havoc—at which you can scarcely wonder if you will but bring yourself to recall how with his 'diplomatic' conversations he tried to embroil—now Russia with England, now England with Russia. The sentiment he has aroused by these activities is not hatred, but diminished esteem. 'The German Emperor, who cannot stick to anything for two days at

[1] Count Muraviev, who succeeded Prince Lobanov as Russian Foreign Minister, was avowedly anti-German.

a time '—so says the *Novoe Vremja* of the day before yesterday, and continues in that strain. People no longer take the sovereign seriously. That is a grave peril. For when the hour of danger comes, when the question arises : ' Is the Emperor a man who can be depended on ? '—how will that question be answered, in Germany and outside it ?

" I am writing this with my own hand, and keeping a tight hold on myself, because I know how this kind of thing distresses you. But the Emperor's personal prestige is losing ground every day ; that cannot be argued away. He had better not draw too extensively on his credit with the Princes and the nation !

" Your faithful

" H."

Eulenburg did not answer, but set down his reflections as follows :

" *January* 16, 1897.

" I am not so stupid as to overlook the dangers represented by the Emperor himself, and the expression of his character in more or less alarming incidents. But what Holstein overlooks is the obligation of friendship by which I am *bound*. I have always been a decent sort of person, and so I shall always try to help a friend who happens to be in difficulties. Moreover, I believe I am serving my Fatherland by so doing. And I very much doubt if I *should* be serving my Fatherland by leaving the Emperor stranded, or ' driving him to the wall,' which in reality is the dearest secret desire of my friend Holstein ! Everything, in Holstein's brain, takes a political colour. I too regard serious affairs of State in a political light. But to *fit the Emperor* into the

whole organism in such a way that it will not suffer can only be done by regard to his individuality. To accomplish that fitting-in is consonant with my friendship and my duty towards the Fatherland.

"How should I treat the Emperor in any other way? A man of thirty-seven cannot be educated by me—only the force of circumstances can educate him. But to adapt these as far as may be to the Emperor's ideas and character seems to me more justifiable than to let things drift and wait to see what will become of him—*and of us.*

"I am very tranquilly conscious of *willing* the right, and so far as I possess the means, of doing it."

As before, he confided in Bülow. He sent him Holstein's letter, and wrote on January 16:

"Things in Berlin are not at all satisfactory—they never have been; and I think that the existing antagonism between H.M. and the Foreign Office sensibly contributes to the acuteness of the situation. . . . You remarked in your last letter that Germany is really divided into two camps, the Bismarckian and the Marschallian; and you were perfectly right. So I am thinking hard over some means of knocking them both on the head, for that alone can restore the Royal prestige. In my opinion it might be done by a *strong and united Ministry of eminent and expert men.*"

Bülow was infuriated by what he had heard: "I can only say that when I look into such abysses, I feel but the more completely on our dear Sovereign's side, and love him more fondly than ever."

In the course of February and March fresh combustible material was supplied by the burning question of the Big Fleet. By the naval officers on his Staff—of whom the Chief of the Naval Cabinet, Admiral von Senden, was foremost—the Emperor was persuaded to take in hand without delay the building of a great War Fleet ; and on behalf of this, to replace the hitherto much-esteemed Secretary of State, Admiral Hollmann, by a stronger personality. The statesmen in the Government were scantly edified by the step, if only because their position in face of a Reichstag which would be newly elected within a year was made even more uncomfortable than before. The Chancellor wrote of this on February 4 :

> " Even to-day I can prophesy that this Big Fleet scheme is a practical impossibility within any predictable period. The present Reichstag will not agree to it, at any rate so soon before the elections ; and if the electors had even an inkling that anything of the kind was on foot, the next Reichstag would be even worse than this one. If it were possible to intensify this opposition, the departure of the universally esteemed and popular Hollmann would do it. I regard the whole idea as stillborn, no matter what Naval Secretary or Chancellor may espouse its cause."

Holstein, according to his wont, connected the scheme with the most sinister of cabals. He saw conflict with the Reichstag and the *coup d'état* as a certain consequence of the Big Fleet proposals ; and Botho Eulenburg as the coming Chancellor dawned on his horizon—one of the men whom, as we know, he combatted and persecuted. He urgently warned his friend in Vienna against this

cousin. The way he did it deserves some notice—he tried to frighten Philip Eulenburg with the Press :

" I know you have hitherto done your utmost to avert ominous critical moments for His Majesty. Perhaps the present crisis too may be postponed *ad diem incertum*—who can tell ? But *one thing* I want to say now, in your own interests, so that you can act in good time : Beware of letting your cousin Botho come to this place ; for if you do you will be held responsible for Hohenlohe's removal, as true as I sit here ! *Anyone* else, civilian or soldier, would be better for you, and probably for the country—for Botho is, by all I hear, very ill indeed. I had occasion to learn, when we were trying to reduce the exaggerated Tausch sensation to its true proportions, how anxious all the papers were to fasten something on you. With several of them the utmost we could do was to obtain their silence. Say anything in your favour—' no ! they could not do that ; they had too much material of the other kind.'

" My dear Eulenburg, won't you just look back and recall what I said to you *in the summer of* 1890 ! I said, or rather wrote, something like the following : ' Beware of your family-feeling. You have made your own position with the Emperor, quite by yourself. Your relatives, if they come here, will endanger that position ; there is always something unpleasant about a clique.'

" So far as the Emperor goes, this prophecy has not been fulfilled ; but it *has* been, and all the more for that, where general public opinion is concerned. In the course of these years the

Press has been so skilfully muzzled that to-day *you* are looked upon as the man behind *everything* that your kith and kin and their associates have blundered into. If the appointment of His Excellency Botho to Strasburg had not fortunately been prevented, you would even then have fallen under suspicion. If he comes here now, his fiasco will probably mean the end of your official career. After the defeat the Emperor will scarcely be in a position, or a humour, to keep you. You know that I go if Hohenlohe and Marschall go, so that personally speaking it doesn't matter to me who comes. But for the Emperor I should consider it a real misfortune if you too were brought down ; and I want to put it to you whether, in the worst contingency—that is, if Botho really does come—it would not be best for you to withdraw for six months from affairs, on the pretext of health, and also to get yourself dispensed from attendance on the Emperor. If you don't, you will figure to the nation as the man who advised the Emperor to begin the campaign, which—there can now be no doubt—will end in a political Jena. I am conscious of having, for nearly eleven years now, often given good advice, and never bad—or if I am mistaken in the latter respect, I beg you to refresh my memory. In the same way I can say of you that you have always been a loyal comrade to me. So if I now caution you against the greatest mortification of your life, I am only doing what is natural in our situation. I am following my instinct in this matter, just as I am writing of this ' Eulenburg Question ' with my own hand.

" As ever your faithful,

" HOLSTEIN."

The hypocrisy of this composition is revolting. No one knew better than Holstein how little Eulenburg had ever been influenced by family-feeling in his actions. That he had at times been in favour of his cousin's appointment to the Chancellorship was what no one could reproach him for, because Count Botho was indubitably one of the few men who were peculiarly fitted for the leading position in the Government. It is very much to be regretted that his distinguished powers were never fully utilised. So that it was nothing but an incitement to go against his duty when Holstein suggested to his friend that he should oppose the best candidate so as to protect himself from attacks. And who would have been the instigator of these threatened attacks? Was it an accident that when the Press had anything to say against Philip Eulenburg, it was always a variation on the theme which Holstein's letters first introduced, and this in contradiction of what he knew to be the truth? Eulenburg's answer, now as before, obeyed the dictates of that dignity which marked him. He ignored the underlying motive and wrote :

" Vienna, *February* 7, 1897.

" Your kindly letter of the 3rd gives me food for reflection. I am answering without exactly knowing what I ought to say. For I cannot alter either the facts or your view of them. . . . As to the vague Fleet-building scheme I do beg you to admit the idea that in an age of bargaining even kings may ask for *a great deal*, in the hope of *getting something*. But it is true that even so there is a lot of combustible material about, which is anything but welcome to me. I should particularly regret the loss of that excellent Hollmann. I wished to see Senden in his place

only because he would, in a month, be so utterly swamped that God Himself could not get him out of the bog.

" The end of your letter moves me deeply. It breathes of a friendship which I do perhaps a little deserve, but for which I want to thank you from my heart. You know what I think of the possibility in question. I am as dispassionate now as ever I was."

The real divergence, now as before, lay in the two men's personal attitude to the Emperor. Guided by the purpose we know of, Holstein was at this time eager to make mountains out of molehills. A marginal note by the Most High, saying that Germany must try for a *rapprochement* with France, he magnified into a new Governmental programme in which he saw the proof of His Majesty's utter irresponsibility. Eulenburg tried to reduce these exaggerations to their true proportions, pointing out that a marginal note was not a programme, that the Emperor's impetuosity often manifested itself in these hasty combinations, which nevertheless were unlikely to lead to any serious results. On this occasion Hohenlohe agreed with him, declaring that he did not mean to " make a tragedy out of it." So that Eulenburg was quite right when he complained to Bülow : " But why should marginal notes, suggesting rather absurd combinations, indicate Utopian tendencies ? It is nothing but ill-will and hatred."

These sentiments found ample nourishment in the dangerous turn taken by the Greco-Turkish developments regarding Crete. The island had risen against Turkish rule and declared union with Greece ; Greece had acquiesced and landed troops. German policy in this question was guided

by the desire to prevent any ventilation of the Far Eastern problem, which might lead to universal involvements. England seems to have cherished other views. This stimulated the Emperor to repeated interference in the diplomatic negotiations ; and Holstein, in his turn, seized the opportunity for undermining his own sovereign still more deeply. He was eager to prove that Goluchowski wanted to break with his allies and throw in his lot with England. We have already mentioned that on this pretext he so insulted the allied Minister that a dangerous state of tension ensued. In his private fulminations to the Viennese Ambassador he let himself go without reserve. " Your Goluchowski is a mutton-head ! " he wrote to Eulenburg on February 15 ; and in a cipher telegram on the same day he insolently said : " Could you not find a place for your friend G. in the merino stud at Liebenberg ? " Eulenburg's comment on this was : " No. But I could reserve a stall for Holstein in the stable for biting, kicking horses."

These private pricks and stings were the accompaniment to positively egregious official conduct. Germany proposed to the Powers that the action of Greece should be countered by a combined blockade of the Greek coast, but the Foreign Office left the Ambassador in Vienna in ignorance of this suggestion. He heard of it through Goluchowski, and immediately called Holstein to account in a telegram. Holstein tried to get out of it by ridiculous quibbles ; and in revenge he pestered Eulenburg, whom he knew to be ill, with daily telegraphic behests. " Keep in mind that the interview you are to have with Goluchowski will have great influence on our further relation to Austria-Hungary. Be eloquent. Bring up all your reserve forces." The whole fuss was trumped up.

The affair was of little significance for Germany, nor was there any danger that Austria would leave the Alliance, unless she were driven to do so by the continuous acerbities that came from Berlin.

The impression given by all this is that Holstein's proceedings were directed to making such mischief between the Austrian Minister and the German Empire that he would be able to bring down Goluchowski. Eulenburg felt this very strongly; but he suspected something more besides, as his answer of February 25 reveals :

> " It is easier to write unfriendly telegrams than to answer them in a friendly spirit. I do my best when I tell you, very dispassionately, that the claims made on this occasion by the Foreign Office sometimes recall the *procedure* of Bismarck and Son when they wanted to get rid of an Ambassador they did not like. I should very much like to know what was meant by giving me *no* telegraphic information of His Majesty's proposal, which Szögyeny wired here and which was instantly answered by Goluchowski ; and at the same time making *me* responsible for Goluchowski's reply being not precisely what the Foreign Office desired. . . . Therefore you feel that he must be relegated to the merino stud. If the Foreign Office wants to relegate me to the same company, the stall at Liebenberg is quite ready, and I am *very willing indeed* to retire to it at any moment. The only question is whether the Foreign Office will easily find another muttonhead as good-tempered and useful as I am." . . .

He found himself obliged to give the Imperial Chancellor some explanation of this sharp letter to Holstein, which had been shown to Hohenlohe. Hohenlohe's answer was (March 3) :

"I can understand the effect on your nerves of our friend's letters and telegrams, and can't blame you for your *riposte*. On the other hand, one ought not to resent Holstein's changing humours. After all he is of the old Bismarckian school, when everything was talked over and decided in the dismal ground-floor of the Chancellery, and when the monarch took very good care not to disturb the Bismarck *circulos*. Now behold! a monarch thirsting for activity who wants to have his own say. . . . The diplomat of the old school is not used to that. Besides, Holstein does not know H.M., and so is not under the assuaging influence of the sovereign's personal charm."

With Holstein himself the epistolary duel proceeded. Eulenburg's letter of the 25th had crossed with one of Holstein's, containing the following expressions of opinion: "Please send me back the two telegrams appended. They must not go into the Viennese archives. But it is necessary that you should be aware of these disturbing developments —disturbing because of the excitable strain in the Emperor's telegram. The few who have seen it are one and all equally uneasy." The four last words are underlined with red pencil, and an exclamation mark is appended. Eulenburg answered on February 27:

"I too think that particular telegram 'excitable.' But I want to tell you quite sincerely (of course for your private eye alone) what I think besides. The excitement is not of an alarming nature, either psychologically or otherwise, but bears the stamp of his profound and ever-increasing animosity for Marschall. . . . This whole invasion of an *impossible* sphere, in the

shape of a message to the Reichstag (which in other respects results from H.M.'s defective education in constitutional matters, when he came to the throne), is in my opinion merely the reaction from a bout of spleen against Marschall, which had to find an outlet somehow. *C'est le fond de la chose.* I deeply deplore it—but it will not alter ! "

Holstein answered the vigorous *riposte* of the 25th with tortuous evasions, throwing the blame for his own unwarrantable conduct upon the Emperor, who was supposed, in an interview with the Austrian Ambassador, to have said something different from what he had agreed with the Foreign Office to say. Even if this had been true, it would have been no excuse for not immediately informing the German Ambassador in Vienna. For the Foreign Office had had instant cognisance of the Emperor's words, so that there could have been no misunderstanding. At the end of his letter Holstein had the effrontery to say, and again underline the words with red pencil, putting, moreover, a red exclamation mark in the margin (to any expert a certain sign of his neurotic state) : " That a man like you, of calm temperament and great good-humour, should have been reduced to the condition manifested by your last letter is only another proof that things can't go on like this much longer."

And indeed it seemed as though everything was working up to an acute crisis. On one side the Foreign Office was at its work of undermining and harassing ; on the other the Emperor was being manipulated by Admiral Senden and his creatures. This state of affairs produced the unfortunate speech at the Brandenburg banquet on March 2, 1897, when the Emperor described Bismarck and

Moltke as merely the tools of William the Great, and compared his grandfather with the mediæval saints—the notorious "Henchmen" speech. Its effect was to make Holstein, on the 5th, declare Hohenlohe's resignation to be imminent. Eulenburg answered next day :

> "Your news distresses me. Certainly no worse moment could be chosen for a crisis, if such there is to be. That H.M. will feel this is, at any rate, my *hope*. Europe in feverish agitation, Germany torn by factions, passion running high in every quarter! Who could replace the Prince? No—I think His Majesty will see it!
>
> "His speech alarmed me very much. To be sure I have survived many a similar storm, and seen how South German feeling can fluctuate. Please don't think that I *won't* see how things are going. I see it very distinctly. But I also see many counterbalancing influences. In the first place, the swift march of time—the electric effect and then . . . the *oblivion* of such incidents! Should any trace of them remain, even that may be swept away by a storm from some unpredictable quarter. Events and destiny are stronger than the individual will. One does one's appointed task and more—does the impossible, well-nigh—and behold! a spring-zephyr, when one looked for a hurricane. We must wait and see."

Though he thus tried to soothe Holstein, he found the situation in Vienna brought about by him so disturbing that he made up his mind to make earnest representations on it to the Chancellor and Emperor. To the Emperor he wrote this warning :

"Vienna, *March* 12, 1897.

"By my persuasions and my intimate intercourse with Goluchowski, I have managed to diminish, so far as may be, the harm done here by the Foreign Office, *and the Foreign Office alone.* But *everything depends on there being no more of this kind of thing.* So I again beseech Your Majesty to go very carefully to work in dealing with all questions which concern Austria, and if the Foreign Office gives any trouble, to restrain it firmly."

The real situation is laid bare in a letter to Bülow of March 8 :

"I must tell you, alas ! that the antagonism between H.M. and the Foreign Office has become well-nigh unendurable. You know my opinion —that only in times of peace do I think these strained relations might conceivably be carried on. But this more serious situation has shown them to be impossible. Goluchowski, of whose goodwill to Germany you are aware, is *wounded to the core*, and by the Foreign Office simply and solely—he makes no bones of naming Holstein. He told me that only with His Majesty could he now discuss matters. The distrust, the neuroticism, of the Office, and the Press-feud organised in its interests, must (he said) render other negotiations impossible. Now, do we want the Triplice, or do we not ? In such circumstances, I really am justified in asking ! But I have to fall back upon this—that things can't go on as they are. Even suppose it was nothing to me if H.M. *did* get us into hot water again—but the difficulty would be all the more serious because the Foreign Office now makes no concealment of its opinion that His Majesty is mad ! It is cer-

tainly disastrous, in the middle of all this, that the Emperor's speech should have fallen like a bombshell on Germany. I wrote my opinion of it to Holstein on the 6th. He will think me optimistic, but it *is* my opinion that we shall survive it.

"They say Marschall is unrecognisable—looks like a ghost. Everything points to a speedy end to all this. God grant that it may give us *some peace!* Holstein's phantasies are delirious, and he is making the most idiotic personal combinations. If only we can keep our heads! But I don't think it will be very easy. To preserve any sort of peace with the Foreign Office grows more and more difficult every day. Of course I shall, now as before, be all for *stability*.

"I imagine that, at the close of the session, Marschall will really go—or want to go—on account of his health. Then no attempt will be made to keep him."

A week later (March 15) Eulenburg recurred to this theme:

"And now tell me, where should we be to-day without Goluchowski? and where *shall* we be, if this persecution goes on? I repudiate all responsibility. I feel very distinctly that my persuasions will not prevail against his profound distrust for the Foreign Office in Berlin."

Two days before he had written to the Chancellor: "For the moment Holstein is angry with me, and purposely writes no word of the crisis. He does not forgive me my attempts to spare Goluchowski so far as may be, which I make in the interest of our relations with Austria. Besides, here as elsewhere his perception is very keen.

Goluchowski detests him, and there is no love lost between G. and Marschall either. His Majesty, Your Excellency, and I are the *sole* pillars of the alliance."

Holstein was sulking. For the whole period between March 5 and 22 we have only one morose letter and one very sarcastic telegram from him. At last Eulenburg felt that he must call him to account. On March 22 he wrote :

"Lately, dear friend, you have been giving me alternate pinpricks and sugar-plums. But many more of the former than of the latter. I have often told you that I don't keep things back, but give my opinion frankly. And so I propose to do now. We have known each other too long, and are too much attached, to play Hoodman Blind with one another.

"I am very well aware that you are not pleased with my activities here. You do not write this in so many words—but explicitly enough. And on occasion you do speak out—so you can't be surprised if an independent man like myself has thoughts of retirement.

"I have *never* been ambitious. But for all that I have never shirked any fatigue if I could be of use to the service and the Emperor. If thereby I have won recognition from people whose judgment I value, it has only stimulated me in the good cause. But when I am found fault with, my susceptible artistic temperament gets the upper hand of me. I flounder, and do even worse than I naturally should. And as I feel miserably ill, these susceptibilities are growing on me. So it will be easy for you to scare me off. But I think it a very superfluous endeavour, for I should be only *too delighted* to

pack up my trunks and go home to Liebenberg. Nor should I feel the least atom of a grudge against you or the Office. I should give the Emperor the pretext of 'health.' If he did not believe me, I should point out with the utmost delicacy that in matters of detail I did not see eye to eye with the Office, and that the service, in my opinion, would be the better for my departure.

"Anyhow, I have applied for a week's leave, and will think over my plans.

"From Berlin I hear practically nothing, which in existing circumstances is much to my taste. No offence, dear friend. I am always as of old."

Holstein let a week go by; then he answered mysteriously that things of which one could not write were impending, and referred Eulenburg to Bülow, who would enlighten him when they met in Venice, as they were soon to do. Meanwhile Eulenburg had written on the same day, and in view of his correspondent's long silence had briefly gone over the ground again:

"In my last letter I may possibly have given you the impression of being hurt and piqued; I want to efface it, if I did. It is not by any means the case. I am far too intimate with you, and far too fond of you, to feel anything more than a passing irritation—which may always happen between friends. But it was nothing more, and never will be anything more.

"But I do take my stand on this—that I simply cannot survive officially if I do not possess your confidence, and that of the Office as a whole. The immensely difficult position in which I have been placed for years has been endurable and,

in the general interest, useful *only* because I was upheld by the full reliance placed upon me by His Majesty and the Office, and because I could feel myself to be personally liked by those whom I valued and respected. If that is no longer to be so, the whole scaffolding of my mental powers will break down, I shall lose my nerve and my keenness. My artistic temperament will get the upper hand—and I shall be repelled by everything apart from it, and flee from that everything.

"I am laying bare my inmost self to you. If you want to keep me—you must spare me. This is all it is—any *hostility* is as far from me as earth from Heaven."

Holstein answered by reiterating his familiar dirge in all its length and breadth; but neither explained himself in any way nor had anything fresh to say. They had apparently reached a deadlock. But after this experience Eulenburg felt more than ever convinced that some change must take place, and soon. This was Holstein's own opinion, only he saw things the other way round. Was he right, after all, and was Eulenburg in error when he continually obstructed Holstein's designs?

Most people, pondering the end of William II's reign and the situation produced by it, will feel inclined to subscribe to the verdict that it would have been better if that sovereign had early been deprived of the power to take the helm of the ship of State. Holstein's gloomy forebodings have been fulfilled; and so it naturally appears as though his warnings and admonitions and the advice he gave had been justified by events. And does it not follow that history itself must condemn his opponent?

So at first sight it seems; and anyone who

judges by appearances will at best, perhaps, excuse Eulenburg's arduous efforts to defend his friend and Emperor by the mere fact that he *was* the Emperor's friend, and that his affection blinded him to the magnitude of the dangers threatening the Fatherland. In after years he did not himself fail to ponder this view. Over and over again he asked himself whether he had not, in his duty towards his friend, lost sight of his duty towards his country. But in the end he always answered in the negative, and after earnest commune with his conscience was driven to confess: "I could not have done otherwise." He recorded in 1902: "What I did for the Emperor was always minutely weighed in the balance of friendship and love of country. The ideas that I had imbibed from my earliest youth were as far as could be from what has been called 'upholding the Emperor's absolutist velleities.'" The considerations which induced him thus to take himself to task are summarised in the appendix on Holstein to be found in this volume. They are there so exhaustively treated that there is no need to labour the point. But an historical parallel may possibly serve to fortify his argument.

In considering Germany's unhappy fate, one involuntarily casts a glance at England. The strength of the English Constitution, the enviable stability which has hitherto resisted every internal and external assault, indubitably consists in the fact that in England the centre of gravity has, for centuries, lain elsewhere than in the Crown and its immediate wearer. In the last analysis this may be traced back to the year 1688, when the sovereign's will was once for all confined within constitutional limits—when, as Edmund Burke said, "the monarch was sacrificed to save the

monarchy." Was not this what was likewise, sooner or later, Germany's and Prussia's essential need, and had not the moment come with William II's reign? Was it not even in the 'nineties the only way to avert the Revolution, the collapse at home and abroad?

The answer might be "Yes," if there were a true parallel between the Germany of 1900 and the England of 1688. But it was in essentials that they most radically differed. England at that time possessed in her aristocracy such men as could steer the State through the dangers of a throne-revolution without her suffering injury. In Germany there were no such men. It is vain to dispute that point, for history has proved it, and daily proves it, relentlessly, terribly. Moreover, England was not seriously menaced from without, while Germany's neighbours were only awaiting the moment when internal dissensions should enable them to effect her downfall, and set their feet upon her neck. If we picture to ourselves the reactions consequent upon such impotence as Holstein was trying to impose upon the Emperor, and the impression produced abroad by the inevitably resulting conflicts; if we imagine the state of German foreign policy under Holstein's unrestricted rule—he whose dealings were at that very time unmistakably confirming the long-existent doubts of his complete sanity . . . we cannot escape from the conviction that it would have been impossible to alter the system of government in the Empire without exposing it to dangers which it would probably not have survived. In 1897, moreover, it was self-evident that no one could envisage the extreme measure of dethroning the sovereign. Eleven years later, things had already taken a different aspect. But at a time when the heir to the

throne was not yet of age, who could have ventured even to think of doing violence to the Crown? This, quite apart from the question whether there was any pressing need to take the extreme course—a question which can only, with any justice, be answered in the negative. Hence for all those who are blessed with deeper insight, there can be no doubt of the justice of Eulenburg's summary—already quoted from—of the year 1902. It was as follows:

> "It was my part to protect the Emperor. Not perhaps because he was my 'Emperor.' For I had too much knowledge of the world to be capable of fighting for fictive ideals which I could see to be nearing their end. Nevertheless I did also see in the *human being* who was William of Hohenzollern too much valuable material for me to leave him in the lurch. Despite his foibles, the Emperor's personality had traits of a sovereign who was, to be sure, an unaccountable being, but was by no means a commonplace one—and that, among the puppet-kings, was after all something that counted."

If we keep this in mind, we shall see that the parallel of Holstein's designs with the glorious English Revolution completely breaks down. Holstein's battle-cry implied not merely the sacrifice of the presiding sovereign, but that of the monarchy itself as it had hitherto existed—of the idea of Prussian Kingship. To save this was Philip Eulenburg's endeavour, when he tried to shield the person of the king; and who will maintain that he might not have succeeded if such a man as Holstein had supported, instead of opposing, him? *Ability and unity in the high places of State*—that alone could have

preserved the Empire against the Monarch's errors and the incapacity of the general public.

It is the same idea as that of Eulenburg in his letter to Bülow of January 16: "A strong and united Government of eminent and expert men." As guiding intelligence for such a Government, a man whose capacities were equal to the appointed task, and whose personality should be agreeable to the Emperor—a man who could win the confidence of all—was assuredly above all desirable. Eulenburg saw that man in his friend, Bernard Bülow. He regarded it as his mission to bring Bülow to that leading position, once he had convinced himself that things could not go on as they were.

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